1: DeLand O-4 (No date)1908 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

"Tuesday, January 1st, 1805. In the morning we permitted sixteen men with their music to go up to the first village, where they delighted the whole tribe with their dances, particularly with the movements of one of the Frenchmen *who danced on his head.* In return they presented the dancers with several buffalo robes and quantities of corn. We were desirous of showing this attention to the village, because they had received an impression that we had been wanting in regard for them, and because they had in consequence circulated invidious comparisons between us and the northern traders. All of these, however, they declared to Captain Clarke, who visited them in the course of the morning, were made in jest." (id 203.) 000

Buffalo Dance. "Saturday, 5th. We had high and boisterous winds last night and this morning; the Indians continue to purchase repairs with grain of different kinds. In the first village there has been a buffalo dance of the last three nights, which has put them all into commotion, and the description which we received from those of the party who visited the village, and from other sources, is not a little ludicrous. The buffalo dance is an institution originally intended for the benefit of the old men, and practiced at their suggestion. When buffalo becomes scarce, they send a man to harangue the village, declaring that the game is far off and that a feast is necessary to bring it back, and if the village be disposed, a day and a place is named for the celebration of it. At the appointed hour the old men arrive, and seat themselves cross-legged on skins around the fire in the middle of the lodge with a sort of doll or small image, dressed like a female, placed before them. The young men bring with them a platter of provisions, a pipe of tobacco, and their wives, whose dress on this occasion is only a robe or mantle loosely thrown around the body. On their arrival each youth selects the old man whom he means to distinguish by his favour, and spreads before him the provisions, after which he presents the pipe and smokes with him." (id 206.) 796

Hunt. "Sunday, 13th January, 1805. We have a continuation of clear weather, and the cold has increased, the mercury having sunk to 34 degrees below zero. Nearly one-half of the Mandan nation passed down the river to hunt for several days; in these excursions men, women and children, with their dogs, all leave 224

stream from the Knife River, where they separated after quarreling over the division of a buffalo. 174
Those who moved farther upstream along the Missouri and Yellowstone became the 101
"Paunch" Indians, while those who remained near the other Hidatsa villages were known as the Hidatsa.

By 1700 the entire section of the Missouri from the Cannonball to the mouth of the Yellowstone was occupied by groups of 174
Mandan, Hidatsa, and Crow of the "Paunch" band. The greatest concentration of villages was near the mouth of Heart River. 101 131
These large earth-lodge villages were occupied by Mandan of the Nuptadi and Nuitadi bands and were situated on both banks of the Missouri. Agriculture was intensively practiced by these groups. Farther upstream at the Painted Woods, the Awigaxa band of Mandan and the Awaxawi band of Hidatsa had villages. The Awatixa band of Hidatsa were on the south bank of Knife River. Agriculture was practiced by all these groups. North of Knife River were the less agricultural Hidatsa, who sometimes came to the north bank of Knife River to occupy their large earth-lodge village and to plant corn. Generally they were farther upstream, on the Mouse River, or in the Turtle Mountains, living as nomadic hunters. Immediately to the west of the more nomadic Hidatsa were the nomadic Crow. These groups had prescribed territories and lived peacefully together so long as one group did not infringe on the territorial rights of the others. These groups moved little until the close of the eighteenth century, when the aboriginal population was sharply reduced by smallpox and other epidemics. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, the region below the Cannonball was occupied by nomadic groups who were in part replaced by the Arikara after 1725 when they began their northward migration which did not terminate until 1862, at which time they united with the survivors of the Mandan and Hidatsa villages at Fishhook Village.

In another report the writer has analyzed the ceremonial organizations of the various village groups of Mandan and 171
Hidatsa, using genealogies, historic accounts of travelers, and 796 ●
native traditions and has shown that two distinct inheritance 428
patterns existed: (1) the Mandan pattern of inheritance of principal bundles and rites within the clan and (2) the Hidatsa and

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428

Awaxawi pattern, which provided for the inheritance of bundles and rites from the father or a member of the father's clan.[30] In this respect, the Awatixa, who have the longest traditional history of residence near the Mandan, were intermediate, having features of both systems.

TABLE 1

INTERTRIBAL AND INTERVILLAGE CULTURAL BORROWING

Ceremony	Mandan	Hidatsa	Awatixa	Awaxawi
Okipa	x	....	....	....
Corn and Fertility	x	....	....	....
Old Woman Never Dies	x	x	x	x
Small Hawk	x	....	....	....
Snow Owl	x	....	....	....
Robe bundles	x	....	....	....
Shell Robe	x	....	x	....
Knife clan bundle	....	....	x	....
Water-buster clan bundle	....	....	x	....
Earth-naming	....	x	....	x
Hide-beating (Sun Dance)	....	x	x	x
Bear	x	x	x	x
Imitating Buffalo	....	x	x	x
Painted Red Stick	x	x	....	x
Buffalo Corral	x	x	x	x
Buffalo Neckbone	x	x	x	x
Sunset Wolf	....	x	x	x
Sunrise Wolf*	....	x	x	x
Thunder	x	x	x	x
Missouri River	....	x	x	x
Creek	x	....	x	....
Earth-lodge-making	x	....	x	....
Sacred Pot	x	....	....	x
Woman Above	x	x	x	x
Holy Woman	x	x	x	x
Eagle-trapping	x	x	x	x
Fish-trapping	x	x	x	x

* The Mandan had a Wolf rite inherited through the Prairie Chicken clan, but the features of the rites are only remotely similar to the Hidatsa Wolf ceremonies.

Table 1 indicates the extent of intertribal and intervillage cultural borrowing which had occurred between the Mandan and Hidatsa village groups with respect to ceremonies performed.

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[30] Bowers, *op. cit.*

to demonstrate the extent to which he had worked for the wel- 622
fare of the entire village, then offered an opinion as to the wis- 537
dom of a certain act or policy. He was never demoted, the Mandan claimed; others younger who had been distinguishing themselves merely replaced the older man in public esteem. A chief's greatness was based on the length of time that his opinions were accepted to the exclusion of all others' opinions. A chief was expected to conform strictly to village and tribal custom.

The day-by-day and calendar round of economic, social, and 796
ceremonial activities were rigidly regulated by tradition. In matters relative to gardening, the Corn Bundle leaders, Goose Society, and females of the various households set their own rules. When public sanction was given a young man by one or more members of the council of older men to perform a certain ceremony and he had made public announcement from a rooftop that he would perform the ceremony, a time was reserved for the ceremony, and the Black Mouths would have prevented any interference. The Mandan believed that quarrels should not arise over schedules for performance of the various ceremonies. The fact is that the Mandan liked to attend ceremonies and believed that bad luck would come to anyone who deviated from the normal pattern of behavior.

The responsibilities for leadership in various Mandan social 554
and ceremonial activities were profusely scattered through the 796
entire population. A person who would be the leader in one ac- 626
tivity became a subordinate member of another activity in which he was expected to follow the leader's directions. For instance, when the time arrived for the performance of the Okipa ceremony, the entire population was organized around the officers for that ceremony, while the Black Mouth Society enforced the rules. It is highly improbable that the Black Mouths received any formal instruction. Custom defined the rules of behavior during the Okipa which were known by all except very young children. It was also customary when the enemy were not especially troublesome for the greater part of a village group to leave for a short time to trap eagles. The village would break up into a dozen or more camps, each of which was under the leadership of a male having an eagle-trapping bundle. Regardless of a man's status during other activities, he was subordinate to the

554 leader.[6] Even the most distinguished war leader, who was one of
●796 the two head chiefs of the village, frequently joined an expedition
626 under another for the purpose of capturing horses, although
in this instance recognition was often shown an outstanding leader by naming him a co-leader.

An essential function of a chief was to mold public opinion so
622 that a village could act in unison. A chief was considered eminent if for a long time under his leadership there had been a minimum of dissension in the village. Mandan informants still speak of Good Boy, who was chief of Slant Village below the Heart River after the first smallpox epidemic. He was able to unite the remnants of several villages into a single village and to co-ordinate elements with a minimum of friction. He was essentially a village leader who devoted himself, according to tradition, to the rebuilding of the tribe to its former prominence. It is significant to note that, a few years after his death, one group of Mandan separated from the parent-village and were not reunited until Good Boy's son, Four Bears, was elevated to second chief.

622 A chief could prevent intervillage or intravillage warfare only
to the extent to which he could inculcate a concept of tribal
182 unity. Neither a chief nor the council has authority to prevent a
778 portion of a village from separating and establishing a separate
village. Such separations as have occurred have usually been of short duration, largely because of the integration of the ceremonial structure through the entire tribal population. Although each permanent Mandan village was in a large measure a separate economic, social, and ceremonial unit, the villages were not entirely independent. The turtle drums, which were considered the most sacred objects of the tribe, were held within the Nuptadi band of east-side Mandan, and the other villages were obliged to borrow them for ceremonial purposes. Whereas the sacred cedar in the center of each village was a symbol of village unity, the Mandan considered the turtle drums a symbol of tribal unity.

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[6] Cf. chap. vii, "Eagle-trapping."

not possessing wealth or important sacred bundles it was largely 581
a social event involving the two households. Although young 584
men would court their girls, marriages were arranged by the relatives, who disapproved of elopements. The mother would watch her daughters, and, when she saw that they were seeing the young men often, she would discuss the matter with her husband. She would advise her daughters not to marry without a considerable exchange of goods, as to do so would be grounds for criticism. Mothers would explain the importance of ceremonial bundles and advise their daughters of the importance of keeping them in the lodge. People would say that a daughter was no good if little was received at her wedding.

There were in each of the Mandan villages a large number of 581
families owning or controlling important tribal bundles. These 778
families were considered the authorities on tribal lore and cus- 425
tom. They received, in addition to the produce of their gardens and their share of meat and hides from animals taken on the group hunts, a great deal of property and honors for officiating at the ceremonies. To preserve their status, they endeavored [556]
to have a considerable display of goods at the marriage of one of their children. Families with important related bundles 581
endeavored to marry their children into families also having 778
important bundles, the feeling being that those reared in a 796
lodge where important bundles were kept were better trained in learning the complicated rites associated with tribal bundles. A household that held an important tribal bundle inherited within a clan endeavored and generally succeeded in selecting a son-in-law who was of the same clan as the daughter's father. It was also believed that a man and his son-in-law got along better when they were of the same clan. In a large measure, the Mandan were successful in preserving most of their rich ceremonialism through the smallpox epidemic of 1837 because of the character of the formal training of those who were to inherit the traditional rights and responsibilities for the ceremonies and because of a system of preferred marriage in which the parents of both households selected their children's mates. It can be definitely said that the bulk of Mandan tribal lore was preserved by a small number of families, that their status was high in the

581 778 796 village, a[illegible] they endeavored by selective marriages to keep the bundles and the associated ceremonies within their group.

584 The Mandan taught their children that they should marry by the same method as their parents married. An analysis of the various methods of marrying will illustrate the significance of this Mandan rule.

584 437 778 583 The method used by the most distinguished families was known as "choosing a son-in-law and buying him a sacred bundle." The parents of a young woman who had reached the age when she should marry selected a young man who had a good reputation as a warrior and hunter and whose family owned an important ceremonial bundle. They would buy a white buffalo robe from some of the hunters or trade corn and horses for it with one of the many tribes that came to the village each fall. These robes were highly valued and would cost a family a high price in horses, garden products, and robes. Having secured one of these robes, they discussed the proposed marriage with the oldest daughter and secured her consent. It was important to get the daughter's consent, since, should she refuse after the marriage arrangements were instituted and run away, the village would learn of it and speculate as to the causes for her action. A daughter was expected to obey her parents and forget any other young men she had been seeing.

584 431 778 The young man was invited in by the girl's father, and an offer of marriage to the daughter was suggested. A robe was put down, and he was asked to sit on it with the young woman. The white buffalo robe was put over their shoulders, and they were given food prepared by the girl's mother. If the girl had younger sisters, they sat with him and became his wives when they were grown. The girl's brothers brought their new brother-in-law horses. As soon as the food had been eaten, he walked out and onto the top of his father-in-law's lodge, where he addressed his father's sacred bundle, announcing that the white robe was offered to his father's gods. His father's sister would come to the lodge when hearing him make this announcement and take the robe down to care for it until he performed the ceremony.

585 431 778 Having made the vow to perform the rites, he began collecting robes and other property and was assisted by his wife and

224 out daily to travel as much as one hundred and fifty miles from the village to observe the numbers and movements of the buffalo. Returning war leaders were called in to report the number and size of the herds they had observed. The leader planned the hunt on the basis of the knowledge he had acquired from several sources and designated the spots where the party would camp each night. This information together with the time of departure from the village was given to the Black Mouth Society, which sent its announcer through the village to notify the people.

221 241 •796 The summer buffalo hunt was scheduled as a permanent part of the summer's activities and did not interfere with the normal village routine. The gardens were prepared and planted in May, and the first performance of the Okipa was celebrated just prior to leaving for the summer hunt. Since one of the purposes of the Okipa was to have the Buffalo Dance performed, it was believed that it should be held prior to the summer hunt. Ceremonies to the buffalo were believed to insure a good hunt and the replenishment of their numbers by the escape of the buffalo spirits from the spirit homes in which they lived before being born into the herds. The leader was not authorized to call an unscheduled hunt.

224 561 Crows Heart believed that all the leaders selected in his time belonged to the Black Mouth or Bull men's societies, since these were the two oldest active societies, but felt that membership was not obligatory, since in former times there were so many people that all did not belong, especially those who were too busy with other ceremonial matters. The leader never undertook to direct the hunt unassisted. He invited in all those with the right to pray to the buffalo to meet at his lodge and assist him. These would be the officers of the Okipa and Red Stick ceremonies, Okipa Makers, and all those who had buffalo skulls in their bundles whether acquired by vision or purchase. He discussed his plans with them and changed them if any offered a reasonable objection. The hunt was frequently canceled when war leaders reported unusual numbers of enemies about.

224 In early times dogs were used, but, after horses were acquired, the summer hunts of later times were out much farther. The leader was always to the front, and the party followed behind

224 could go to the pile brought in by anyone if her husband was
462 slow in returning with his meat. There was no moiety division
of the animals as was employed with the corral. Everyone was expected to work curing the meat, men and women alike. Older men would haul poles for scaffolds and set them up. Some husbands would be out as scouts and could not butcher. Crows Heart had been on a number of summer hunts and said that he never made a special effort to help his lodge group. As soon as he unloaded his meat, it was taken by anyone who was ready to cure it. Scattercorn said that one did not ask permission to take a hunter's meat and that one was more likely to be criticized for not working hard enough than for appearing selfish. All my informants were in agreement that quarrels over division of the meat and hides were unknown.

224 The leader and the leader of the hunters were entitled to the tongues, but these were shared with others having the buffalo as a god, while some tongues were given to old people. The evenings were spent in dancing and singing.

There was a marked increase of fasting during the summer
785 hunts. Many thought that they secured better visions when fast-
789 ing away from the village. Others thought that it would be
224 highly desirable to fast far from the village to get visions from
supernatural beings that might not come to the villages to
●796 "adopt a son." The older men taught that the young buffaloes lived in certain buttes and that fasting while out on the summer buffalo range would increase the next year's calf crop. To perpetuate the buffalo supply, they made offerings of speckled eagle feathers and calicoes to these buttes and encouraged the young men to fast near them. The leader would receive many valuable presents from young men seeking visions at that time while praying for their success when the thongs were being inserted through the skin. Dragging heads of recently killed buffaloes through the camp was a customary practice. Crows Heart thought that most young men who had recently fasted in the Okipa ceremony and had not received visions would repeat their vision quest at that time. The hunt would be terminated in time to reach the village before the corn was in the milk stage. Usually a second performance of the Okipa was held a short time after returning.

INTRODUCTION TO MANDAN CEREMONIALISM

796 177 FEW Mandan bundle transfer ceremonies had been performed during the thirty years preceding this study, and the information secured on the former ceremonial activities was based on observations and participation of informants or the informal instructions received of former bundle-holders. Medicine feasts to the bundles were held at irregular intervals, but the forced change from village to rural life when the tribe was placed on family allotments scattered throughout the Reservation, the extinction of the buffalo, and the termination of intertribal warfare in large measure led to the abandonment of the ceremonies. The first of the major ceremonies to be dropped was the annual summer Okipa, which was last performed about 1890. At the time this study was being made, the old women of the Goose Society were accustomed to meet annually during the summer, and some of the old men were using the fish traps for which the ancient rites were still employed. A few men still maintained eagle-trapping lodges along the Little Missouri River, where they were accustomed to go during the fall months to trap eagles and hunt deer.

796 778 Most of the principal tribal bundles were preserved by the children of former custodians. White Calf had the Lone Man bundle; Calf Woman had the buffalo masks for the Okipa and a Woman Above bundle; Ben Benson had two of the turtle drums, and Scattercorn had the other; Scattercorn also had Moves Slowly's Hoita and Corn ceremony bundles except the portions that had been accidentally burned; Foolish Woman had his father's Star bundle; Little Owl had Hits on Back's Sigaxaga bundle; Mrs. White Duck had the Skull bundle. Feasts were sometimes made to these bundles by relatives largely out of respect to the old people, but lavish disposal of goods was no longer practiced. Crows Heart and his sister, Front Woman, were still making offerings to the eagles and hawks in the spring

•796 at the time of the first thunder. The Eagle-trapping bundle
778 rites were still being performed, and a few old people doctored
those who were ill or had suffered an accident.

The secret character of Mandan ceremonialism contributed
796 to the difficulty of the study. Each Mandan ceremony was
778 secret, and rules providing for the performance of and acquaint-
124 ance with the secret rites differed somewhat between bundles.
In general, it was not possible to complete the study of a ceremony with a single informant, owing to overlapping rights in the bundle, one informant being unwilling to divulge information belonging to another.

This study doubtlessly does not cover all ceremonies performed by the Mandan after 1837. Informants claim that all tribal rites were preserved through the smallpox epidemics of 1782 and 1837. It was possible to obtain intelligible accounts of all rites mentioned by early travelers to the Mandan villages. There was, however, a reduction in the number of duplicate bundles for the same ceremony. When reductions occurred, the
[784] original bundle was preserved. The individual rites introduced
from time to time by the medium of vision instruction were usually of short duration in the tribe and died out before becoming inaugurated into the tribal ceremonial structure. A few instances of vision bundle experiences are cited in chapter v, "Personal Bundles and Vision Experiences." Had time permitted, several hundred vision experiences could have been recorded, since they were related on many social and ceremonial occasions. Informants never volunteered to relate the sacred myths or to supply data on a ceremony, nor did they volunteer information to the effect that they owned certain rights. They would, however, divulge the names of others having knowledge of tribal bundles. The writer found that better co-operation was received from an informant when a simple feast was made to the bundle. It removed the fear informants felt when relating the rites.

The writer was impressed with the extreme conservatism of the Mandan. Informants frequently requested a retranslation of a significant portion of a rite to make certain that it had been properly recorded. They recognized variations in myths be-

tween bundle lines. Some informants thought that these 796
bundles must have originated in different villages because their
older people who were living when the tribe occupied two vil- 778
lages had spoken of ceremonial differences between the villages. 124
They believed that these ceremonial differences went back to
mythological times when the ceremonies were first taught to
the people.

Mandan tribal sacred bundles had these elements in common: 796
each contained objects representing the characters and incidents
of the myth; the rites were dramatizations of the sacred myths; 778
there were prescribed rules of behavior when in the presence of 773
the bundle or while it was open; an incense was always burned 424
while the bundle rites were being performed or when the rites
were terminated; there were songs and a sacred myth which belonged to the bundle; each bundle included a buffalo skull; the ritualistic lore was secret, and payment must be made to the bundle-owner for a knowledge of the rites; there were fixed rules of inheritance for the sale and transfer of the bundle; tribal sanction of a bundle transfer was at a public feast to which those owning related bundles were invited; feasts were made to the bundle by nonowners as a social obligation; and bundle-owners on occasion would give Bundle Renewal feasts to their own bundles to which were invited those owning important tribal bundles.

The Mandan recognize four seasons which were associated 796
with the spring, summer, autumn, and winter buffalo. Since in- 805
formants could not agree on any other division of the year, it is
highly unlikely that they recognized any other uniform divi- 221
sions. The year count was important in relating events. Ceremonies were, in general, evenly divided over the year. Ceremonies for success in warfare or doctoring were held at any time. On the other hand, rites relating to agriculture were begun in late winter when the first water birds appeared and were held throughout the summer until the southern flight of these birds had passed. The Okipa was always held during the warmest months, while the Snow Owl, Red Stick, and White Buffalo Cow ceremonies to bring the winter buffalo herds were always held

221 796 805 during the coldest months. Table 3 gives the approximate time of the principal tribal ceremonies.

778 773 The Mandan attach great significance to the sacred myths associated with the sacred bundles, and informants constantly explained the relationship of one bundle to another in terms of incidents mentioned in these myths. For that reason, the sacred myths belonging to the various bundle rites were recorded as completely as possible and appear in this study in much the same form and detail as they were recorded. It was a customary practice for a Mandan to invite to his lodge one having important tribal bundles and pay him to have the myths related privately. Those having a considerable knowledge of tribal lore were held in high esteem. The sacred myths were considered

TABLE 3

APPROXIMATE TIME AND PURPOSE OF PRINCIPAL TRIBAL CEREMONIES

796 221

Approximate Month	Ceremony	Purpose of Ceremony
June to August	Okipa	General tribal welfare Buffalo fertility rites
May	Corn Fertility	To insure good gardens
March to October	Goose Society	Rains and good growing conditions for crops
August to October	Harvest festival	Thanksgiving rites for crops
March to October	Old Woman Who Never Dies	Rain and good growing conditions to insure good gardens
January to January	Old Woman Who Never Dies	Doctoring and warfare
March to October	Corn Pipe	Fertility
September to November	Eagle-trapping rites	To capture eagles
July to September	Eagle-trapping rites	To trap fish
January to January	Eagle-trapping rites	To corral buffaloes
April	Eagle-trapping rites	Success in hunting or warfare
April and November	Big Bird	Warfare Rain
January to January	Small Hawk	Warfare
June to August	Small Hawk	To call buffaloes
December to March	Snow Owl	To call winter buffaloes
January to January	Snow Owl	Warfare
March to October	Snow Owl	Rain
January to January	People Above	Warfare Doctoring
January to January	Shell Robe	Warfare Doctoring
December to March	Red Stick	To call winter buffaloes
December to March	White Buffalo Cow	To call winter buffaloes
January to January	Bear	Doctoring and warfare
March to November	Snake	Rain Doctoring Warfare

secret and were never related publicly. One paying to have the 778
myths related did not receive rights in the ceremony. Instruc- 773
tions in the rites and songs were divulged only to those purchasing the bundle rites.

So far as the writer was able to determine, the ceremonial 796 ●
pattern had been established prior to A.D. 1800 and underwent little change in subsequent years. There was, however, a greater display of goods after the introduction of the horse and the establishment of trading posts.

Matthews wrote: "The work of Prince Maximilian contains the most accurate and extensive information regarding their customs and manners. Notwithstanding the great changes in the tribe since 1834, the majority of his notes might be used without alteration in describing the Mandan of to-day."[1]

The Mandan preserved their rich ceremonialism after the smallpox epidemic of 1837, according to Matthews, who added:

> The square, the medicine-lodge, with its four poles in front, surmounted by sacrificial effigies, and the ark, as they may be seen to-day, seem to be the almost exact counterparts of those which were seen in the old Mandan village at Ft. Clark, in 1832 and 1833, by George Catlin and the Prince of New-Wied, if we are to judge by the drawings they have given us. Within the temple and around the ark, the Mandans still perform the ceremony of the Okeepa, which Catlin so accurately describes. The awful severities of the rite, have however, been somewhat mitigated since his day.[2]

In addition to the sacred myths associated with the bundles, 773
there were numerous stories of a magical character which were 424
bought and sold. A few of these myths were recorded in the field but are omitted from this book, since a number of them have already appeared in print.[3] The most popular of these were: (1) the exploits of Spring Buffalo and Corn Silk; (2) Stiff Robe and the Buffaloes of the Four Seasons; (3) Four Wings; (4) Snake Village and Buffalo Village; (5) Sun as a Gambler and Cannibal; and (6) the Pet Magpie.[4]

The First Creator myths also belong in this category. Since 773
this mythological character had a dual personality, in organizing 128

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[1] Washington Matthews, *Grammar and Dictionary of the Language of the Hidatsa* (New York, 1873–74), p. 14.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 10.

[3] See Martha Warren Beckwith, *Mandan-Hidatsa Myths and Ceremonies* ("Memoirs of the American Folk-Lore Society," Vol. XXXII [Boston, 1938]).

[4] See also the myths recorded below in chap. vii, "Eagle-trapping Ceremony."

Chapter IV

THE OKIPA CEREMONY

●796 198 THE Okipa[1] ceremony was an elaborate and complicated affair. It was a dramatization of the creation of the earth, its people, plants, and animals, together with the struggles the Mandan endured to attain their present position. The history of the tribe was a part of the secret lore held by the officers of the ceremony. The uninformed could pay to have the creation myths told but could not repeat them. The songs, chants, and rituals were conducted by men who by virtue of inheritance and purchase had acquired that right, but the words were unintelligible to the population at large, being, according to tradition, in an ancient Nuptadi dialect. Only the legitimate officers understood their meaning, and that information was never divulged to another except when purchase was being made into the ceremony. The few phrases recognized, such as "Corn Mother" and "Thunder Father," were insufficient to understand the substance of the rites.

796 361 Certain arrangement of lodges within the village was necessary for the performance of the ceremony. Each village had an open circle some one hundred and fifty feet in diameter reserved for this ceremony, and lodges were not permitted in that section. A cedar post, surrounded by a plank wall, occupied the center of this open circle, and lodges were arranged around the circle with their entrances toward the cedar.

361 346 The ceremonial lodge was to the north of the cedar and was a part of the row of lodges facing toward the open circle. It was distinguishable from the other lodges by its flat side at the entrance (see Fig. 13), which was to the south. It was so oriented that the entrance faced in the direction Lone Man[a] went when he left the tribe.

Since lodges were not permitted within the open circle, nor were ashes and refuse deposited there, through normal accumu-

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[1] The word *okipE'* means "to look alike" and refers to the Bull Dancers, who were of the same stature and were painted and dressed alike for the dances.

[a] [Culture hero; impersonated in the Okipa ceremony - Analyst]

2: Bowers E-5 (1930-1931)1950 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

The ceremonial lodge was occupied by a prominent male of 346
the WaxikEna clan who was known as the custodian of the
Okipa lodge.[4] His family lived with him in the lodge. The 614
WaxikEna clan, to which Lone Man, traditional founder of the 793
ceremony, belonged, met and selected one of their number to occupy the lodge and protect the ceremonial equipment left there by the various officers of the ceremony. The Mandan, upon joining the Hidatsa at Like-a-Fishhook Village, built a ceremonial lodge and selected Arrowhead Earrings as custodian. His family lived in the lodge except when it was needed for a ceremony, at which time they removed their lodge property. The family was paid for the use of the lodge or, as Calf Woman explained, for the trouble they had been put to in preparing the lodge for the ceremony. When Arrowhead Earrings died, the lodge should have been taken over by another member of the WaxikEna clan. His son-in-law, Never Eats Marrow, although of the Hidatsa Knife clan, was held in such high respect by the Mandan that he was intrusted with the lodge, and his daughter, Calf Woman, who supplied much of the information about this ceremony, was born in this lodge. She ultimately acquired the buffalo masks used in the ceremony through purchase from the WaxikEna clan after the buffaloes became extinct and the ceremony was no longer being performed.[5]

The repair of the cedar[6] and the wall inclosing it was also in- 778

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[4] Catlin is possibly in error when he says: "The 'Medicine Lodge,' the largest in 793
the village and seventy-five feet in diameter, with four images (sacrifices of different-coloured and costly cloths) suspended on poles above it, was considered by these 614
people as a sort of temple, held as strictly sacred, being built and used solely for these
four days' ceremonies, and closed during the rest of the year" (George Catlin, *O-Kee-Pa* 796
[Philadelphia, 1867], p. 81).

[5] This is an instance of shifting from clan inheritance commonly occurring since 1845.

[6] Scattercorn in recent years was considered custodian of the sacred cedar, which was placed west of Crows Heart's home. Members of the WaxikEna and Tamisik clans were expected to attend and assist in the repair. Others would come to make offerings to the cedar at that time, which in recent years consisted chiefly of calicoes. She used one song during the ceremonial repairing of the cedar and inclosure, and it was directed to the four directions.

At the east side of the cedar she would sing:

o-ta'-nu-mą-kE (east people)
mikaxo' (big herd. Buffalo cows.)
EhE'nakahoc (I am saying)
masa'numąkE (north people)
maxEnu (one)

At the west side she sang:

ota'numąkE
mikaxo'
EhE'nakahoc
masa'numąkE
nupa (two)

2: Bowers E-5 (1930-1931)1950 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

778 trusted to the WaxikEna clan, who could take any articles left
at the cedar as an offering for their own use. The amount of
793 goods placed at the cedar during a year was considerable, since
614 sometime during the performance of every ceremony and age-grade
796 society dance a visit was made to the cedar to ask the
blessings of Lone Man, and some article of value was placed
there. In the case of strictly winter ceremonies held in the winter
camp where a cedar was never erected, offerings frequently were
not made to the cedar. The cedar together with the surrounding
wall and willow band was called Minimi'tahEdE, meaning "the
retreat of the waters."

778 In theory, goods deposited at the cedar became the property
of any member of the WaxikEna clan who happened to be
614 passing by. In practice, however, the goods finally reached the
421 old men and women of that clan. Those appropriating too much
goods for personal use lost status in the village. Those living
near the cedar had an advantage over those more distantly removed
in reaching the goods first. Apparently there was no
tendency to take the offerings away at once. Scattercorn told
how a very beautiful robe hung on the wall several days before
a man removed it and then not until a number of people had
gathered there and to whom he announced that he had observed
that a feeble clan brother was in need of a new robe since
the one he was then wearing was shabby.

621 Each fixed village unit had its own complete set of officers.
Crows Heart explained that the tribe was formerly divided into
619 a number of fixed bands, each one occupying one or more villages.
778 His mother belonged to the Is'topa ("Those Who Tattooed
Themselves"). There were also the Nuptadi, Ma'nana'rE[7]
("Those Who Quarreled"), Awigaxa,[8] and Nuitadi. Each of

At the north side she sang:

o-ta'-nu-mą-kE
mi-ka-xo'
EhE'nakahoc
masa'numąkE
na'mini (three)

At the south side she sang:

ota'numąkE
mikaxo'
EhE'nakahoc.
masa'numąkE
to'pa (four)

[7] Other informants thought that the Mananada was not a fixed band but any small group who separated from a principal village when quarrels occurred.

[8] According to tradition, this group lived near the Grand River until late prehistoric times and did not practice the Okipa until they moved to the Painted Woods

these groups set up a cedar whenever a new village was built. 621
Each had its own set of officers, but the turtles originally be-
longed to the Nuptadi band into which the original Lone Man 619
was once born, and it was necessary to borrow them whenever 778
the Okipa was being performed in one of the other villages. They were the common property of the WaxikEna clan. Crows Heart explained that quarrels sometimes occurred in a village, with part of the population breaking away, but that in such instances no cedar would be erected or ceremonial lodge built until it was decided to make the village a permanent one. Scattercorn thought that the groups were stable, although a few families were always leaving one group and joining another. She thought that fission of villages was a difficult thing, as new Okipa officers would be needed.

The Mandan have a number of creation stories which were a 773
part of the sacred myths of the bundles and their associated ceremonies. The sacred myth of the Corn ceremony relates the exploits of the Corn People, who formerly lived below the surface of the earth beside a lake before coming to the surface under the chieftainship of Good Furred Robe. The Buffalo People, who were the performers of the Okipa, were created on the earth near Heart River by Lone Man after the lands were made. In mythological times there was an earth-lodge village of hawks to the east, bears to the north, eagles and other large birds including the Sun and Moon in the sky, to mention but a few of them. The Heart River region became a meeting place of peoples of all these groups. The Corn People migrated northward and united with the Buffalo People. Other peoples were added from time to time through intermarriage and were identi-
fied according to their respective bundles. It was believed that [787]
the visions one had were dependent on the mythological group to which he belonged.

The Animal rites of the Okipa ceremony are reported to have 796●
originally belonged to the Buffalo People, who were created in 773
the vicinity of Heart River by Lone Man and are a dramatization of the freeing of the animals from Dog Den Butte. As new groups united with them, modifications were instituted in the cere-

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region shortly before the first smallpox epidemic. Their emphasis was on corn rites instituted by Good Furred Robe while living far to the south.

•796 mony. In the beginning, the people lived an extremely simple
life without tools and weapons. At that time there were no so-
773 cieties and only a few simple rites, one of which was a Buffalo
Dance in which one man danced. It is believed that, as time
passed, the people acquired skills along many lines; there was a
corresponding development of mutual obligations; new societies
and ceremonies were adopted which grew in complexity. It is
also believed that there was a parallel development of the Okipa
ceremony from the simple Buffalo Dance to its complex form as
performed until seventy-five years ago, and that the cultural
growth of the tribe was divided into four periods which were
represented by the four days of the ceremony.

The principal characters in the ceremony were Lone Man (NumakmaxEna), Speckled Eagle (Hoita), Giver of Ceremony (Koni'saka), and the singers.

796 Lone Man was without question the tribe's most important
deity. The original Lone Man belonged to the WaxikEna clan,
776 and a bundle was founded which contained all the articles used
614 by the Lone Man impersonator during the ceremony. Inherit-
778 ance was through the WaxikEna clan. Before the smallpox
epidemics, there were at least two similar and graded bundles in
each village, and the men holding rights in the Okipa met to
select from their number those who would officiate during the
next ceremony.

796 According to tradition the original Lone Man established the
rule that the bundle should belong to the WaxikEna clan.
778 However, before he left the tribe, he desired a white buffalo
424 robe owned by his brother's son. The young man offered to ex-
change his robe for Lone Man's bundle, and this transaction
was made, the bundle and office passing temporarily from the
WaxikEna clan. The principal bundle was kept, after the small-
pox epidemic of 1837, at Nuptadi Village, and a secondary
[564] bundle was kept by the other village group. Women could in-
herit and buy the bundle but could not officiate in the rites.
Beaver's brother owned a bundle originally at Nuptadi Village
prior to 1837. When he died, his sister transferred the bundle to
her daughters, Shells and Grows First, who were both of the
WaxikEna clan. Little Eagle, who had married the two sisters,
paid them for the right to officiate in the ceremony. He then

paid Big Turtle, Hoita in the same ceremony, for instructions. 796 Little Eagle, who was of the Speckled Eagle clan, was killed in warfare, and Cuts His Horn (WaxikEna clan) bought the right 778 to officiate from the two sisters, and, not being a close relative, 424 a new bundle was established by Big Turtle and the other men having Okipa rights. He officiated once or twice until there was a male in the main bundle line qualified to officiate. Two Chiefs (Prairie Chicken clan) married the two sisters and assumed the office of Lone Man after paying to receive instructions from Big Turtle and the other officers of the Okipa. White Calf, son of Shells (corn) and Little Eagle, bought the rights in the bundle from his mother and received his instructions from Two Chiefs. He never officiated as Lone Man in the ceremony after acquiring the bundle, since the ceremony was prohibited by the army officer in charge of the Reservation. White Calf was asked who would be the legitimate successor after him, and he gave this explanation:

> I could sell my rights to men of my clan, the WaxikEna, three times while still retaining my original rights. Usually only one or two sales were made. Those sales would be to men who had dreamed of Lone Man. People had a great respect for original bundles which had passed through many hands, so possession of new bundles did not give one much prestige unless he had given many feasts to the bundle, and that was hard to do.
>
> Who would receive my original bundle depended on many things. If my wife who helped me put on the feast when I got the bundle were living and had remarried to one of my clan, her husband would have first chance to take the bundle. If she were not alive, then my brothers would have first chance. If none were living, my sister could take the bundle, and her husband could get instructions from the other Okipa officers before officiating in the ceremony. Then the bundle would pass to her son when he was mature.

Before a bundle was transferred or sold, there was a period of private instruction by either one holding Lone Man rights or one of the other officers of the ceremony. The transfer was made final at a medicine feast attended by all persons holding Okipa rights. Goods and food were accumulated beforehand. Eminent men of the tribe offered their prayers for the giver's success and received some articles for their part in the ceremony. This public feast was a means of notifying the village of the legitimacy of the bundle transfer.

The bundles were identical as to content. They contained the 778 following items:

778
1. A buffalo-skin apron with buffalo-hair strands attached
2. Flat staff with the moon and thunderbird carved on one side, a star and the sun on the other
3. A stuffed raven
4. Two-piece wooden pipe inlaid with a dark-colored stone
5. Jackrabbit-skin collar and anklets
6. Headdress of porcupine trimmed with jackrabbit skin
7. A set of buffalo teeth
8. A war-bonnet trailer of alternating raven and swan feathers
9. A buffalo-hair headdress with a stuffed owl attached
10. Four buffalo tails with white buffalo hair attached
11. A staff decoration consisting of a buffalo tail trimmed with weasel fur

Bundle-owners were custodians of the turtle drums, the sacred cedar, and the ceremonial lodge.

796 The office of Hoita ranked equal in importance with that of
776 the Lone Man during the performance of the Okipa but other-
773 wise was unimportant. Hoita or Speckled Eagle represented the People Above but had had no part in the creation of the earth according to the mythology. He was born into the tribe where he was recognized for his supernatural powers. Because of jealousy over a white buffalo robe, he imprisoned the animals in Dog Den Butte. When he learned that another who claimed to be his "son" through the medium of the "walking" ceremony was holding the Okipa, he freed the animals and agreed to co-operate with Lone Man in performing the Okipa.

The rule was that the Hoita should belong to either the
796 WaxikEna or Tamisik clan, and there is no evidence that this
614 rule was ever broken, at least in the memory of my informants. During the period of readjustment following the smallpox epidemic of 1837, Big Turtle (Tamisik clan) held the office. He sold rights in the office to Moves Slowly (WaxikEna clan), who impersonated Hoita, while Big Turtle served as director of the singers. Moves Slowly sold his rights to Iron Eyes (WaxikEna), who officiated, while Moves Slowly assisted the singers. The right to officiate in the Okipa ceremony was given at a public feast.

The Hoita directed the ceremonies performed inside the cere-
796 monial lodge. He supervised the fasters and saw that none who had interrupted their fasting returned to the lodge. He directed the selection of characters represented in the dances and supervised the painting, indicating the time when each rite was to be

●796 performed so that the day and night were properly divided. Lone Man directed the re-enactment of the flood, ceremonies at the cedar, and the use of the turtles as drums. The Hoita could not leave the lodge during the ceremony but sat in his place without speaking while the rites were being performed. This was symbolic of the time he sat in Dog Den Butte holding all the animals prisoners.

Eight singers were required; six used the rolled hides or the turtles, three beating toward the "upstream" and three toward [424] the "downstream" direction. The other two singers carried rattles. Singers bought the right to officiate, and a checkup of [614] clan affiliation of singers reveals an absence of clan restrictions. Likewise anyone having Lone Man or Hoita rights could be a singer providing he was not officiating in another capacity. There were usually many with singer rights so that turns were taken.

One man was selected by the other officers to impersonate the blue heron when none owned that right. He sat at the head of the lodge throughout the ceremony without speaking. The ceremonial paraphernalia which he wore were returned to the officers at the close of the ceremony.

The above-mentioned officers formed the nucleus of the ceremony and constituted, together with those who had previously given the ceremony, the Okipa Religious Society. To these men, meeting in council, was intrusted the duty of selecting qualified young men to give the ceremony. It is doubtful that any man could rise to the position of head or second chief who had not at one time given the ceremony. My informants were in agreement that the two highest chiefs would belong to the Okipa Religious Society by virtue, not of being officers of the Okipa, but because they had given the ceremony.

The desire to give the ceremony was the result of a vision ex-
796 perience wherein one had seen buffaloes singing the Okipa
787 songs. The vision recipient would then have a feast prepared in his lodge, to which he invited the Okipa Religious Society. After the feast he would relate his vision experience and ask for an interpretation. Not all men dreaming of the buffalo bulls singing Okipa songs were permitted to give the ceremony. A young man having such a dream would tell his parents of his supernatural

796 experience. They would know the qualities one must possess to
go through the ordeals of the ceremony. They would appraise
787 their son's ability to meet these requirements. If he were too young or his wives were not industrious or loyal, they would advise him instead to give a feast to the men having Okipa rights, and they would, in turn, pray for his success, giving him some article to wear when out to war. It was necessary to eliminate some candidates. Even then, there were two or three performances in each village every summer as a rule. Sons of former Okipa makers received preference, as young men were expected to maintain their fathers' record.

When the young man having a suitable vision had invited the Okipa Religious Society in and had described his vision, the members would discuss the matter among themselves. They would either compliment him on his good fortune in receiving supernatural instruction to perform the ceremony if they considered him worthy or, if in doubt, they would tell him that it appeared that he was to give the ceremony some time and advise him to fast much, offer feasts to the older men, be helpful to the old people, and go out to war. He was then on probation. If successful, some member of the society would inform him that his former dream was genuine and that he should begin preparations to give the ceremony the following year when the willows were in full leaf. Since there was little inclination to dis-
796 pense with the village summer buffalo hunt, it was necessary to set a time for Okipa performances so as to avoid confliction. When one Okipa performance was planned, it was usually held after the village had returned from the hunt. If there were to be two performances, the first was given before the hunt and the second one upon their return.

As soon as a candidate received permission to give the ceremony, the chiefs' criers announced the news through the village that "a certain man will have the Bulls dance when the next water willows are in full leaf."

According to tradition, the Okipa must be given every summer to insure an abundance of buffaloes and general good fortune. Occasions arose when none had pledged the ceremony for a particular summer. Anyone could then volunteer to give the ceremony and not be required to accumulate goods as payments

to the performers, or one who had given the ceremony could volunteer. 796
Men giving the ceremony more than once were highly [554]
respected. Four Bears gave the ceremony a second time even after he had already become second chief.

Though the ceremony was long, candidates offering to perform the Okipa were acquainted with most of the songs, dances, and prayers beforehand, so the task of instructing the candidate did not require a great deal of time. Since most young men hoped that sometime they would be selected to be a Bull Dancer, they noted carefully the role performed by the Bulls.

It took a great deal of courage to become an Okipa Maker, 796
and the tribe spoke of those who had done so as the bravest men
and looked to them for leadership. It required a considerable 431
amount of property to give the Okipa, for the giver was expected to prepare feasts for the officers of the Okipa during the time he received instructions. He was expected to have at least one hundred articles consisting of robes, elkskin dresses, dress goods, shirts with porcupine work, knives, and men's leggings. Usually one family could not acquire so much personal property.

The Okipa Maker's wives began to gather clothing as soon as 796
permission was granted their husband to direct the ceremony,
which was usually a year in advance. The women called in their 431
female relatives, and sometimes their women's societies helped 614
them. The man asked help of his mothers and sisters as well as the members of his own and his father's clan. As a last resort, he gave a clan feast which all the members of his clan attended. There would be speeches about clan loyalty, and the old men would tell of the great men of the tribe who belonged to their clan and how "this young man has brought honor to us by offering to give the Okipa." Each speech would end with an appeal for goods of some sort to be used in the coming summer ceremony "which was, after all, given for our benefit." People gave freely for the benefit of a clan brother.

Each family of the tribe felt itself to be benefited by the summer 796
Okipa ceremony and expected to give something. The 431
Okipa Maker took his pipe to each lodge where people of his
clan lived, placing it before the door, and the women brought 554
out their contributions. Okipa Makers able to produce a large

796
431 number of robes and other clothing to be given away were es-
554 pecially highly respected by the tribe.

The Okipa Maker was not permitted to kill any buffaloes or
796 to do any butchering during the period he was under pledge to
784 give the Okipa, nor was he permitted to eat any of the entrails from the buffalo. It was believed to have done so would have angered the buffaloes.

796 One of the oldest men of the WaxhikEna clan lived in the Okipa lodge with his family. He was custodian of such ceremonial objects as might be kept there to be used in succeeding Okipa ceremonies. When the time came to prepare for the ceremony, the NumakmaxEna gave instructions that the lodge be cleared of all the family's personal effects. Four men with Holy Women bundle rights swept the floor, carried out the ashes, and sprinkled the floor to settle the dust, after which sage was scattered about on the floor. Each received a robe from the Okipa Maker for his services. No women were permitted to go
[562] inside the lodge after it was cleaned until the ceremony had ended.

The one who was to represent Lone Man asked four men owning ceremonial bundles of The Woman Above (Sun ceremony) to paint the interior of the lodge.[9] At the last performance of the Okipa, the entire interior of the earth lodge was painted, the west half being black and the east half red. Formerly, only a narrow band about four inches wide was painted on each post, black on the west posts and red on the east ones. Woman Above bundle-owners each received a robe for painting the posts.

Opening the Okipa lodge.—When all was ready, the crier (the old man of WaxikEna clan living in the medicine lodge) went through the village before daylight announcing that the Lone Man would open the Okipa lodge the next morning at sunrise in order that the ceremony could be given. The head chief,[10] second chief,[11] council of old men, and all the owners of important tribal bundles painted their faces black and went to the head chief's lodge, where they waited for Lone Man. Dressed in his ceremonial paraphernalia, he came directly toward the village from the prairies to the south.[12] When he reached the village, he was met by the Black Mouth Society men (the police), who questioned him as to whether he was a friend or enemy until he had made known his identity and explained that he had come from his home on a high hill, generally associated with Buffalo Home Butte, in the south to open their Okipa lodge door for the buffalo dance. He was taken directly to the lodge by the custodian of the Okipa lodge, where the head men were assembled. There he told of the time when he lived with the Mandan. He told of the conflict with Hoita concerning a white buffalo robe and that he had once freed the animals from the Dog Den Butte so the Mandan would not starve. He told how he had saved them from the flood and that he had given them the turtles, sacred cedar, Okipa lodge, and the ceremony itself. He told them that he returned every year when the willow leaves were full grown to open their Okipa lodge. He was dressed in a wolf robe, and his body and face were painted white; he wore a headdress of porcupine hair fringed with jackrabbit fur, and on the top of this he had tied a stuffed raven. His collar and anklets were of jackrabbit skin. He carried a wooden pipe in the left hand and in the right hand a flattened ash club with the moon and thunderbird on one side, the morning star and the sun on the other.

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[9] There were only three Woman Above bundle-owners when the last performance was held, and one of these belonged to a woman, Calf Woman. The two other owners, Ears and Clam Necklace, painted the lodge with the assistance of two Hidatsa men owning similar bundles.

[10] Red Buffalo Corn was head chief at Like-a-Fishhook Village.

[11] Bad Gun was second chief at Like-a-Fishhook Village.

The head chief sent the announcer through the village to order all the women and small children to stay in their lodges and to keep their dogs tied up inside while the Lone Man made the rounds of the village relating the origin of the people[13] and their struggles against starvation and floods. At lodges in which resided young men who were to be tortured during the ceremony, he secured knives which he took to the Okipa lodge to be used later in cutting the flesh of the ones undergoing the torture feature. He carried a bag of pemmican from which he gave each man a handful. Much of the day was spent in relating the history of the people and the manner of acquiring all the things he had given the people to make them happy.

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[12] At Like-a-Fishhook Village he approached from downstream, which was from an easterly direction.

[13] Witnesses to this portion of the ceremony say that a very old language was used, the words being largely unintelligible.

The first evening.—The ceremony began in the evening. The
•796 Okipa Maker carried in all the goods he had succeeded in collecting during the year and heaped them at the back of the lodge. Then he carried in a bag of specially prepared cornballs known as "four in one" because they contained ground corn, beans, squash, and sunflowers. He also brought in a sack of
[534] pemmican. A singer brought in a dry buffalo hide rolled up like a cylinder to serve as a drum.[14]

For weeks previous to the performance of the Okipa, the clan
796 leaders, old men, and the tribal medicine bundle-owners talked
787 to the young men, telling them of the importance of seeking vi-
785 sions during the Okipa. Older clan brothers advised specific young men to fast. Men who had been successful warriors, hunters, or doctors attributed much of their good luck to the powers that they had acquired while fasting or hanging from the roof of the Okipa lodge by means of leather thongs fastened through their skin. The result was that a larger number of young men came to the Okipa lodge to fast through the four days of the ceremony. After uniting with the Hidatsa, many young Mandans preferred to fast and go through the torture feature while on eagle-trapping or buffalo-hunting expeditions as the women of the Hidatsa and Arikara tribes did not observe the same rules. The fasters came in directly after the Okipa Maker had completed carrying in the robes, cornballs, and pemmican, and ranged in age from boys of eight years to middle-aged men of thirty-five years. Each was naked and painted according to his own inclination and carried a shield and bow in one hand and the father's medicine bundle in the other.[15] The quiver with the bow and arrows in it was hung back of the faster, and the medicine bundle was attached to a small twig stuck into the ground in front of him. Each carried in a buffalo skull for a pillow and sage brush for a bed. All the fasters arranged themselves around the wall, the Tamisik-WaxikEna division being on the west side, and the other half on the east

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[14] This dry hide was symbolic of the first Okipa in the Dog Dens when only a dry hide served as a drum through the whole ceremony performed by Hoita. For the west-side Mandans it represented one of the periods of tribal history before the turtle drums were acquired.

[15] Many had no medicine bundles but brought one belonging to the father, thinking that they might have good luck thereafter.

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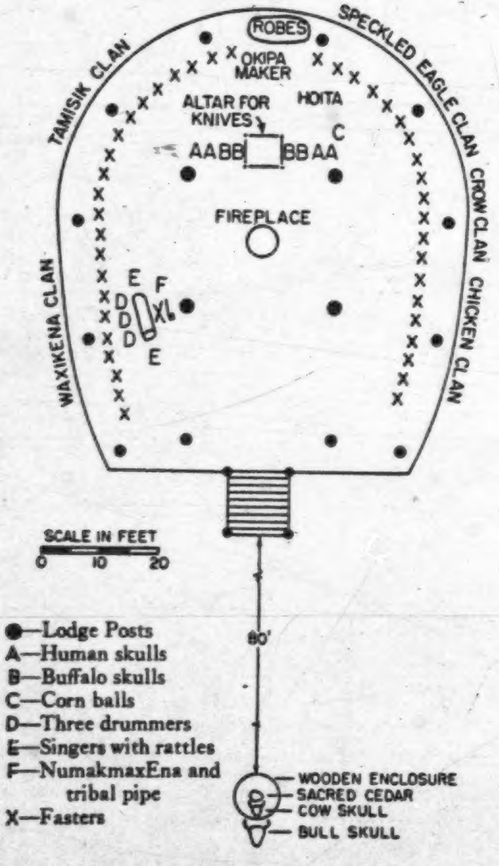
side. The lodge would be full of fasters the first night. Men who had had good dreams came in only to fast a short time. 787 785

The hide drum was to the west side of the southwest post 796


ROBES
SPECKLED EAGLE CLAN
TAMISIK CLAN
OKIPA MAKER
HOITA
ALTAR FOR KNIVES
C
AABB
BBAA
FIREPLACE
CROW CLAN
CHICKEN CLAN
WAXIKENA CLAN
E
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D
D
D
E
SCALE IN FEET
0
10
20
80'
●—Lodge Posts
A—Human skulls
B—Buffalo skulls
C—Corn balls
D—Three drummers
E—Singers with rattles
F—NumakmaxEna and tribal pipe
X—Fasters
WOODEN ENCLOSURE
SACRED CEDAR
COW SKULL
BULL SKULL

FIG. 14.—Seating arrangement for first night of Okipa

near where the fasters of the WaxikEna clan sat, and the three drummers, called the Blue Herons (Hox'ka), sat just back of it.[16] The three drummers were painted red with eagle feathers in their hair and had objects from their own medicine bundles worn around their ankles. Two men serving as rattlers sat at

[16] They were called Blue Heron because during the mythological period these birds were called in to pick up the worms beaten from the hide.

796 each end of the drum. Lone Man sat in front of the drum dressed in his full ceremonial outfit, smoking his pipe, and eating of the pemmican placed before him. The altar was set up between the northeast and northwest posts of the lodge and so arranged that half was on each half of the lodge; that is, there would be two human skulls and two buffalo skulls, and two posts of the small four-post structure symbolic of the four posts of the universe, on each half of the lodge. The Bull Dancers' paraphernalia were on the four-post altar, and beneath it were the sharp-edged tools and splints to be used later in the torture feature of the ceremony (see Fig. 14).

The first act was the ceremonial transfer of Lone Man's pipe to the Okipa Maker to be used by him for the duration of the ceremony. Lone Man then called Hoita from his place to supervise the performance and to see that every detail of the dance, as given in the Dog Den Butte when he was in charge, was carried out.[17] The dance began within the Okipa lodge at once. At definite places in the dance, the drummers picked up the hide serving as a drum and moved it to the east by four stages. At midnight, when the dancing stopped, the drums were on the east side of the lodge. The fasters were expected to cry all night.

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First day.—At daybreak the fasters turned their buffalo robes around so that the hair was on the outside and the head side of the robe was over their heads, imitating buffaloes. The three drummers[18] (Hoxka) came out of the Okipa lodge at sunrise, placed their rolled-up hide serving as a drum to the east side of the sacred cedar, and sat down back of the drum facing toward the entrance to the Okipa lodge. The two men with rattles next came out and sat down behind the drummers. When the drummers and rattlers were in their places, the Okipa Maker came out of the lodge dressed in an antelope hide with the head on,

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[17] Catlin says that Nu-mohk-muck-a-nah (Lone Man) left the ceremony and village after the transfer of the pipe (George Catlin, *Letters and Notes on the Manners, Customs, and Condition of the North American Indians* [Philadelphia, 1857], p. 253). Maximilian says that Numank-Machana (Lone Man) officiates again on the fourth day of the ceremony (*Early Western Travels, 1748–1846*, ed. Reuben Gold Thwaites [Cleveland, 1906], XXIII, 333).

[18] Maximilian reports six drummers: "Three of the men must strike in the direction of the river downwards, and three in the direction upwards" (*ibid.*, p. 325). Six drummers was the correct number according to tradition. The number was reduced after the smallpox epidemic of 1837.

worn like an apron. He wore the hair shed from a buffalo over 796
his head and carried Lone Man's pipe and pemmican balls,
which he placed on the ground in front of the drummers. Then 782
he walked to the south side of the sacred cedar and stood on the buffalo skull he had previously placed there. Grasping the wooden planks inclosing the cedar with both hands and pressing his forehead against the wood, he asked Lone Man to hear him and send the people all they asked for, to bring the buffaloes near the villages, and to keep all bad luck away.

At the completion of the Okipa Maker's prayer and while he 796
stood grasping the wooden inclosure, the drummers and rattlers
began singing; this was the signal for the fasters to come out. 535
They were dressed in their robes with the hair side out and hooked at each other in imitation of a herd of buffaloes as they danced toward the sacred cedar in a double line,[19] one line going to the east of the sacred cedar, the other to the west side. There they formed a straight line on the south side and danced forward and backward in front of the Okipa Maker, who continued his weeping, addressing the first Lone Man to help the people. When the drummers changed the song to one with a rapid tempo, the fasters and the Okipa Maker returned to the Okipa lodge, imitating a herd of buffaloes as they entered the lodge following the Okipa Maker.

The drummers, Okipa Maker, and fasters came out to dance four times the first day, and the procedure was the same on each occasion. They came out at sunrise, before noon, at mid-afternoon, and just before sunset.

Just before dark, after dancing outside had finished for the 796
day, women brought willow firewood to the Okipa lodge, where 562
it was placed in two piles on each side of the door. Women of the WaxikEna-Tamisik moiety placed theirs on the west side, while the other clans placed theirs on the east side. Male representatives of the two divisions of the tribe carried in the wood for the fire, since women were not permitted inside the lodge.
The small boys and many of the young men left the Okipa lodge 796
at the end of the first day, usually leaving from thirty to fifty 785
fasters who intended to remain the entire four days without

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[19] Each half represented one of the moieties. The fasters were also symbolic of the animals held captive in Dog Den.

796 785 food or water and to participate in the torture features. After the Mandan united with the Hidatsa at Like-a-Fishhook Village, there were usually as many Hidatsas as Mandans fasting, but the moiety arrangement of fasters was observed. In fact, Hidatsas gave the ceremony as often as Mandans at this time.

796 421 614 The turtle drums remained in the lodges of their custodians during the first day of the ceremony. These turtles were considered tribal property in the larger sense, and the WaxikEna clan were their custodians. WaxikEna clansmen paid to hold custodianship which could be revoked by clan action. Individuals of the WaxikEna clan were willing to buy the right to keep them when the Okipa was not being performed, otherwise they remained in the Okipa lodge under the charge of the old man living there. Keepers of the turtles treated them like other medicine bundles, making feasts for them and praying to them on various occasions.

796 787 At sunset the Lone Man impersonator dressed up in his ceremonial outfit and went for the turtles. While the Mandan were living in two villages near Fort Clark, the turtles were kept at Nuptadi Village. He went to the owner of the big turtle, the leader of the turtles, and asked him for this turtle first. It was believed that he could predict the abundance of buffaloes through the year by the weight of the turtle drums for, it was said, that the turtles were heavy when the buffalo herds were going to be near the village. People were not allowed to cross his trail when he carried the turtles to the Okipa lodge. The three turtles replaced the rolled-up hide as drums that evening. Everyone awaited word from inside the Okipa lodge concerning the weight of the turtle drums. Soon after the turtles were in their places, the old man of the WaxikEna clan who was custodian of the Okipa lodge called through the village that "the turtles are very heavy and the buffaloes will be near the village so all the people can have enough to eat."

Each of the drummers continued through the ceremony, using the turtle drums. These drums were moved four times in the evening and reached the east side of the lodge at midnight, where they remained until sunrise.

796 *Second day.*—Before sunrise, young men not having an active part in the ceremony brought in green willow branches to be

used in decorating the Bull Dancers. Eight men selected beforehand danced eight times before the sacred cedar during the second day. These men were the largest individuals to be found in the village, and they were trained carefully to take the parts assigned them by the Hoita.

While the Okipa ceremony was going through its first day's performance, the owners of bundles representing creatures which were to appear in the ceremony met according to bundles and selected those who were to dance and receive offerings of goods on the "Everything Comes Back Day." Legitimate bundle-owners could officiate or they could select a young man who, according to custom, would probably inherit one of their bundles. When no selection was made, the Hoita could choose some good dancer to assume the part. Some characters were selected by the Hoita, particularly those representing buffalo bulls who danced during the second day.

The following is a list of characters participating in the ceremony on the third day.

1. Eight men representing buffalo bulls: These men were selected by the Hoita, who chose large men of uniform size. Fasters were often selected, in which instance their fasting was terminated.
2. Two men representing bald eagles: Big Bird bundle-owners selected these.
3. Two men impersonating women: Holy Women, Old Woman Who Never Dies, Holy Robe, and Woman Above bundle-owners met to select their representatives. One was to impersonate a foolish woman, the other a wise one.
4. Two men representing swans: Men having Lone Man rights were selected, since the swan feathers were alternated with raven feathers on the Lone Man's war-bonnet trailer.
5. Two men representing snakes: Snake bundle-owners, of which there were a large number, selected their representatives.
6. Two men, one representing a calumet eagle, and the other a hawk: Selected by the Bird bundle-owners.
7. Two men representing the black bears of the Eagle-trapping bundles.
8. Two men representing grizzly bears: Selected by Grizzly Bear bundle-owners.
9. Two men representing beavers: Those individuals with Creek or River bundles selected them.
10. Two men representing strips of dried meat: They were selected by the Hoita.
11. Two men representing night: They were selected by those people having bundles relating to the stars or moon. Many mythological characters were believed to be living in the sky as stars, and men whose bundle rites included these would meet and select representatives. Many of these mythological characters were believed to have lived on the earth in early days.

12. Two men representing day: These men symbolize the "first day of creation"[20] and were selected by Woman Above bundle-owners.

13. Two men representing wolves: They were selected by the war-party leaders who were known as Old Wolves.

14. One man representing First Creator (the coyote): The Hoita selected the First Creator impersonator, who was usually a mature man with considerable ceremonial knowledge and a record of assisting in many ceremonies.

15. One man representing the meadow lark: He was selected by the Hoita. The meadow lark was represented in the ceremony because it was said to warn war parties of enemies and because, in very early times, the men exchanged the crescents from its breast for seashells with Maniga's people.

16. Young men representing a band of antelopes: There was no selection of impersonators. As many as wished could volunteer.

17. One man representing the Foolish One (ÓxinhEdE): There were a number of OxinhEdE bundle-owners. Their bundles were graded. They selected one of their number or a man who would ultimately inherit the principal bundle.

All those who were to perform on the third day were selected beforehand, but final authorization was received from the Hoita on the morning of the third day in a manner to be described in the account of the third day's performance.

Those impersonating buffalo bulls were painted red, white, and black. When the walking ceremony was to be performed at the close of the Okipa, the face of a small child[21] was painted in black on the abdomen of each bull. While the dancers were being painted, fasters from opposite sides of the Okipa lodge imitated bulls fighting.

After the Bull Dancers were painted, buffalo heads of tanned hide, cut so that they extended to the dancers' hips, were put on. There was a single buffalo horn on the middle of the back of each Bull Dancer's costume to which were tied bundles of willows symbolic of the flood. Each Bull Dancer wore a breechcloth of buffalo skin and wristlets and anklets of buffalo hair. The eight Bulls were all dressed alike and were of equal size.

Early on the second morning, while the Bull Dancers were being painted and dressed, Lone Man walked through the village carrying his pipe in one hand and the carved wood stick in the other. The people gave him robes, for he symbolized the 796 first Lone Man who went through the village each morning at sunrise attending to the needs of all his people.

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[20] Cf. Wolf Chief's version of the Creation Myth to follow.

[21] The face was that of First Pretty Woman. For an account of this mythological character refer to chap. xiv, "Red Stick Ceremony." If the walking ceremony, called by Catlin "Feast to the Buffaloes" (*O-Kee-Pa*, p. 32), was not to be performed, the Bull Dancers' chests and abdomen were painted with alternate horizontal white and red stripes about two inches wide. The "walking" ceremony was performed at the close of the Okipa whenever the age-grade society assisted the Okipa Maker in collecting the necessary property for payment to the officers of the Okipa.

Those painting the Bull Dancers worked all morning and did not finish until noon.[22] The two men with buffalo-hide rattles came out and took their places. The Okipa Maker came out dressed as on the previous day and placed the pipe and pemmican ball in front of the turtles. He proceeded to the south side of the sacred cedar, where he again wept as he prayed to Lone Man to bring the buffaloes near and keep bad luck away from the village. While he was praying, the drummers began to beat the drums and sing, which was the signal for the Bull Dancers to come out. The people would congregate on lodges and 796 around the open circle to observe these elaborately painted ac- 535 tors who performed the dances which were the most colorful of

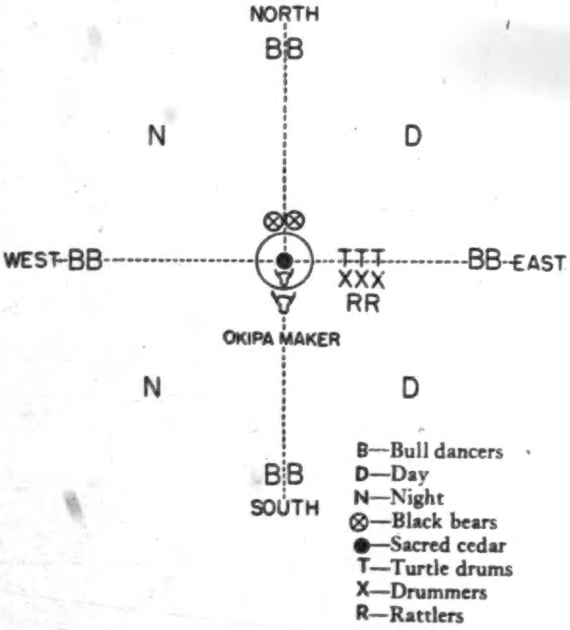

FIG. 15.—Direction symbolism for the bull dances

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[22] Men bought the right and privilege to paint the characters of the ceremony. The Okipa Maker paid the painters for their services.

●796 535 the whole ceremony. The Bulls danced directly toward the sacred cedar and formed a circle around it, then formed in pairs to mark out the four cardinal points, and, finally separated to mark the eight directions (see Fig. 15). A change in rhythm was a signal for the Bulls to return to the Okipa lodge.

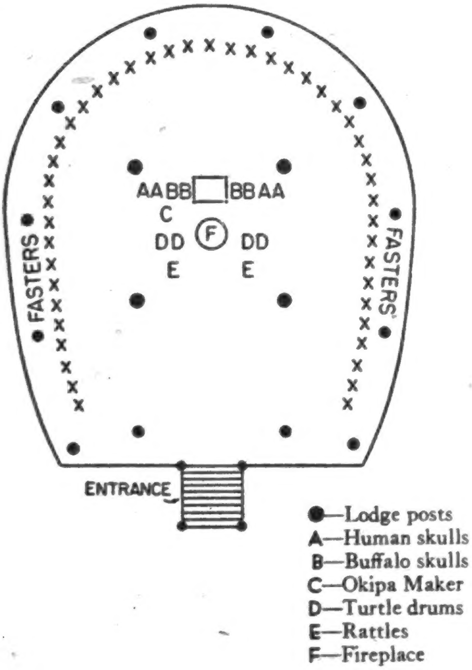
AA BB BB AA
C
F
DD
DD
E
E
FASTERS
FASTERS
ENTRANCE
●—Lodge posts
A—Human skulls
B—Buffalo skulls
C—Okipa Maker
D—Turtle drums
E—Rattles
F—Fireplace

FIG. 16.—Lodge plan prior to torture feature. (After Catlin.)

The drummers, rattlers, Okipa Maker, and the eight Bull Dancers came out eight times the second day and repeated the same performance. The fasters came out only once the second day, following the first appearance of the Bulls. They formed a row at the south side of the sacred cedar and were dressed in buffalo robes with the hair side out. They returned into the lodge last and did not come out again that day (see Fig. 16).

796 785 Fasters began to present themselves for the torture feature[23]

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[23] Cutting off the fingers in the Okipa gradually died out and was uncommon after 1837, though it continued to be a practice when mourning a death or when fasting on a hill or in a remote place. It was said that a man in a dream was instructed that the fingers were needed to handle firearms.

on the second day. Each candidate selected a man of his father's 796 clan to cut the holes through the skin and insert the skewers. 785 These men were selected by each candidate before the ceremony, and the knife to be used was given to the Lone Man the evening of the "Going In" ceremony. As each candidate stepped forward and presented himself, the clan "father" picked up a knife from the altar and cut the holes for the skewers. Two skewers were inserted through the skin on the back or on the breast by which the candidate was suspended in midair by a lariat fastened over a pole of the Okipa lodge. Other skewers were inserted through the skin of the legs to which buffalo skulls were hung. When there were enough candidates, one was hung up while the Bulls were outside dancing in order that each Bull in returning to his place in the lodge could hook the sufferer (see Fig. 17). During the later years at Like-a-Fishhook Village, a corn scaffold was erected at the entrance to the Okipa lodge, and those tortured were often suspended from its beams where they were hooked about by the Bull Dancers when leaving or entering the lodge.[24] When the candidate became unconscious, he was lowered to the ground and left to regain consciousness without being molested by any of the observers. It was believed that experiences with the supernatural when acquired at that time were the most genuine and the richest ones.[25]

A midday meal was prepared for the Bull Dancers. The 796 women preparing the meal wore their robes with the hair side out to resemble buffaloes. They motioned to the lodge where the food was cooked, and the Bulls ran there instead of going into the Okipa lodge. After finishing their meal, the Bulls carried food to the Hoita, Lone Man, Blue Heron, and the Rattlers. The Okipa Maker and fasters were not permitted to eat food or drink water, although they could smoke whenever they wished.

Preparations were made during the evening for the third day,

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[24] At the last performances of the Okipa, a tall pole was set in the ground between the ceremonial lodge and cedar with a rope hanging down. Those going through the torture feature were tied to the rope by means of thongs in their flesh but were not suspended.

[25] After uniting with the Hidatsa at Like-a-Fishhook Village, the torture elements and associated vision quests of the Okipa declined in importance. Those seeking visions preferred to suffer in isolated places, since the necessary rules of conduct were being broken, particularly by women, in the consolidated village.

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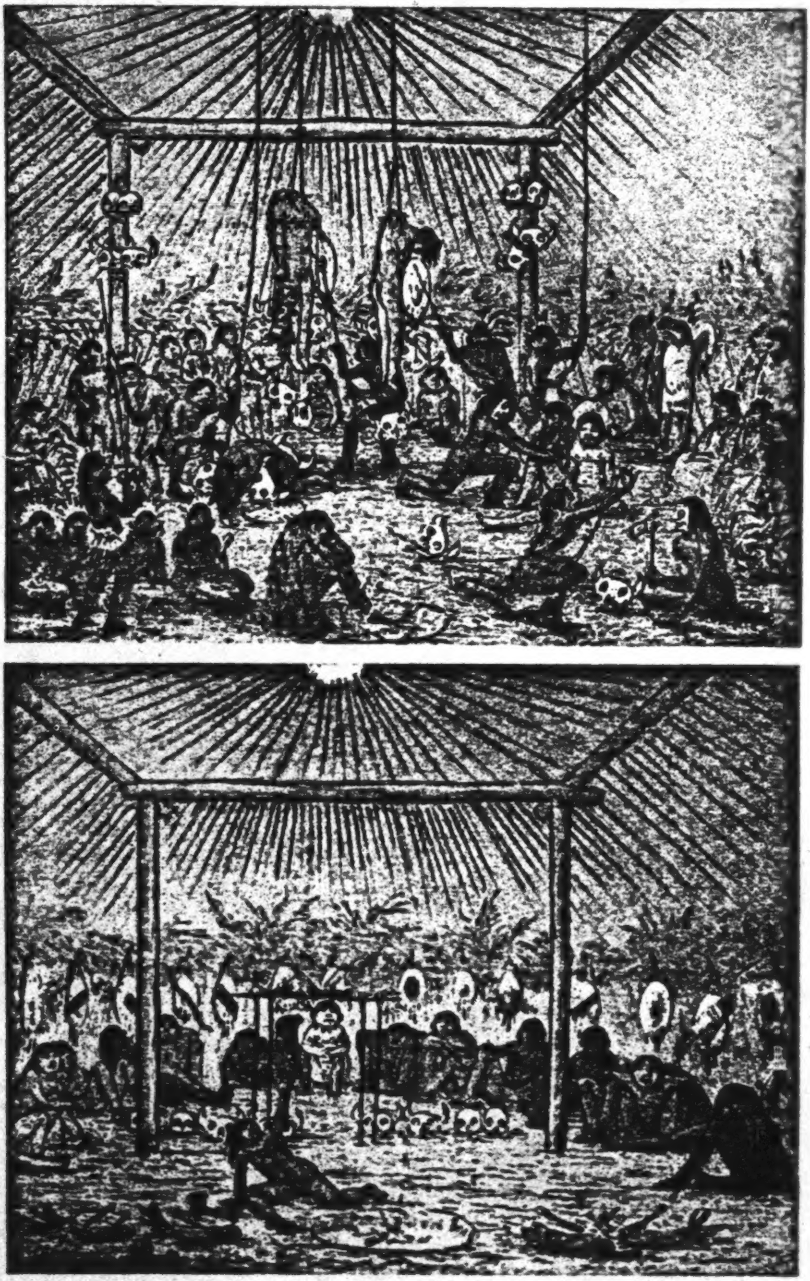

Fig. 17.—Altar arrangement and torture feature. (After Catlin.)

[p. 136]

• 796 which was known as "Everything Comes Back Day." This was the day when all the mythological beings that were on the earth when the first Lone Man and Hoita lived among the Mandan came back. The participants were nominated as stated above

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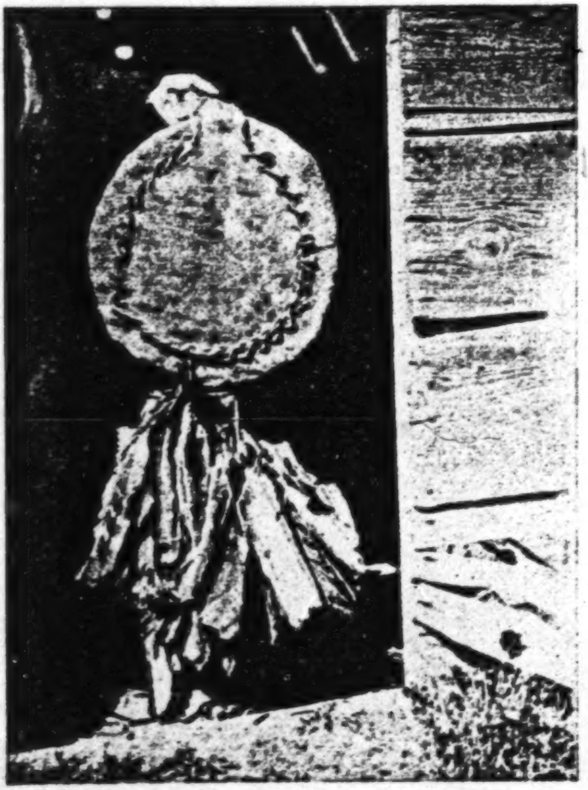

FIG. 18.—Back view of turtle drum with feather collar

and met at the ceremonial lodge to receive their sticks, which was their authority to officiate. (See Figs. 18 and 19.)

Wolf Chief supplied the following firsthand information on the calling-out of those who had previously been selected by the respective bundle-owners to enact their parts in the third day's performance:

> The masks were at the head of the lodge when I entered. They began to name the men who were to imitate the different animals belonging in the dance. The officers first chose First Creator to sit beside the door. He had

796 some willow sticks. He said, "I would like to have a foolish person who looks like a human to paint his body black with white spots and carry a stick representing his penis." That was OxinhEdE, the foolish one. The one selected to assume that part came forward and received one of the sticks.

Then he would ask for a star to join in, and another would take a stick. Then he said, "I would like to have this dry meat represented. I want to have a Black Bear in it," and another took a stick. "I would like to have a grizzly bear."

Then he said, "I want to have a woman in it. I want someone to be the bald eagle. I want a hawk in this ceremony. I want a meadowlark." Men would come and take the sticks.

[778]

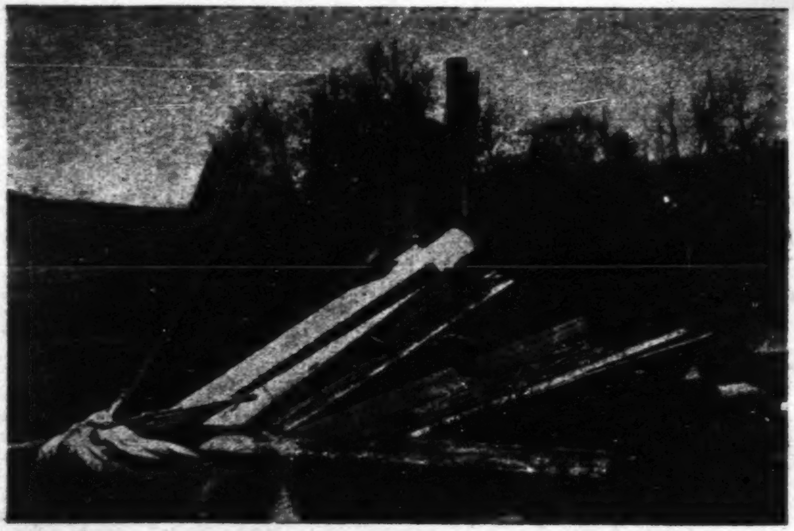

FIG. 15.—Present condition of the sacred cedar

He would say, "I want to select the good buffaloes. I want four of them to be the real buffaloes." Four came and took sticks. "We must have a First Creator here too. I want an antelope." When he came to the antelope, more than one came and took the remainder of the sticks. There would be many antelopes. That ended the naming of the characters so far as I remember, but I know I forgot some of them.

The antelopes would go out and cover their bodies with mud and have sticks for horns. The hawk would have long braided grass and a ball at the end for a club. The bald-headed eagle would have the braided grass for his club. Black Bear would be dressed in a black bearskin.

Third day: "Everything Comes Back Day."—The painting of the Bull Dancers and all the characters represented during this day began at daybreak and continued until nearly noon. The special painters prepared the eight Bull Dancers and the one

Mangy Buffalo, while the other characters were painted by bundle-owners of their own respective groups. Fresh willows were brought in from the river bottoms to decorate the sides of the Okipa lodge and to be worn by the Bull Dancers. A long pole with a rawhide lariat was erected south of the sacred cedar in later years. Here some of the fasters were to "suffer for the Buffaloes" during the day.

The "coming-out" ceremony on the third day was the same as on the second day. The two men with rattles led, followed by the three drummers carrying the turtle drums. The Okipa Maker came out, carrying the pipe and pemmican ball, which he placed in front of the drummers, and took his place on the south side of the sacred cedar, as before, where he prayed to the first Lone Man. The fasters followed close behind him and lay down in a straight line on the south side of the sacred cedar. The drummers began one of the songs, and the animals came out, dancing in pairs. The Bull Dancers formed at the four cardinal points and then at the eight directions. The two characters representing day danced on the east side and the two representing night were on the west side (see Fig. 15). The Bears danced on the north side because the Old Black Bears, whom the Mandan believe taught them the art of trapping eagles and catching fish, lived in the north. The Bear impersonators were dressed in bearhides. Those impersonating the eagles were painted black with white heads. The Antelopes were young boys painted with yellow bodies and white heads. Two men were painted with spots on the back to represent the Snakes, and two wore close-fitting buffalo hides and beaver tails to represent the Beavers (see Figs. 20–23).

Wolf Chief, who had danced the Bull Dance on the "Everything Comes Back Day," had these comments to make on that day's performance:[26]

> All this time Lone Man was at the head of the lodge with another representing the First Creator. Lone Man carried a staff with black raven feathers and white swan feathers alternating in rows between each other on the stick.

[26] For other descriptions of the Okipa ceremony see Catlin, *Letters and Notes on the Manners, Customs, and Condition of the North American Indians*, I, 244–76, and *O-Kee-Pa;* Maximilian, Prince of Wied, *Travels in the Interior of North America, 1832–1834*, in *Early Western Travels, 1748–1846*, ed. Thwaites, XXIII, 324–34; and Henry A. Boller, *Among the Indians: Eight Years in the Far West* (Philadelphia, 1868), pp. 100–111.

796 He had a jackrabbit hide on his ankles; his cap was of raven feathers; he was painted with red paint.

First Creator had a coyote hide covering his shoulders. He had his forehead painted black. He wore a coyote hide around his head.

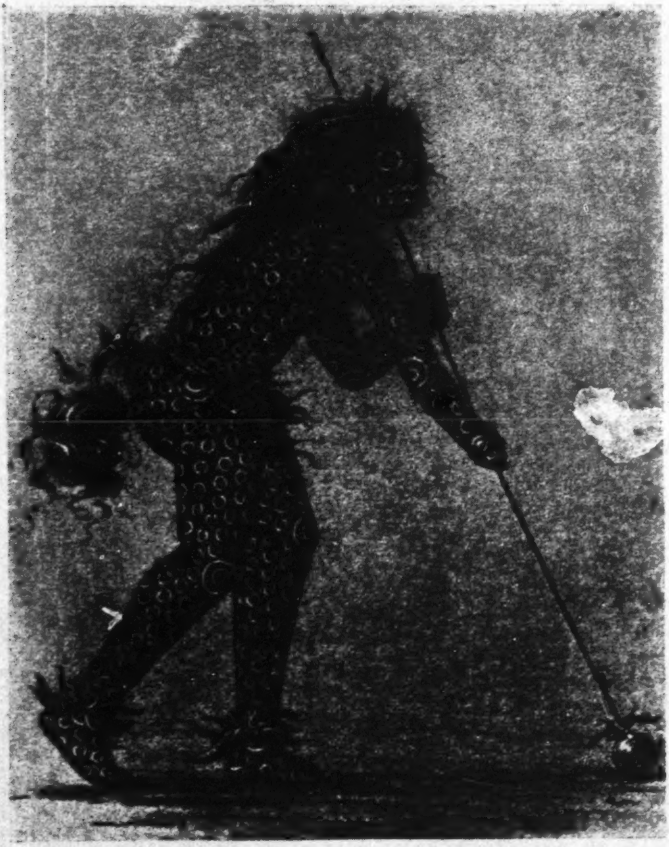

Fig. 20.—Okipa ceremony impersonator: Oxinhᴇdᴇ (Foolish One). (After Catlin.)

Big Turtle was the leader (Hoita) in the Okipa I saw. He selected the Buffaloes; they were Bears Ghost (Mandan), Chicken Bear (Hidatsa), Wolf Chief (Hidatsa), and Red Leaves (Mandan). He asked us to stand at the four directions inside the lodge. I saw the buffalo masks and the young sand-bar willows they were bringing in. They stuck the willows into the wall both upside down and right side up.

Big Turtle said, "It is nearly midday. You should paint these Buffaloes now." During this time the Antelopes were going down to the river to paint, climbing up onto the lodges, or running around in every direction. Bad Buffalo, a Mandan, painted me. They had black, white, and red paint. The Bulls had to be tall to use the heads, so that is why they picked us. They asked me to spread out my legs and arms and rest on two sticks in order to stretch. While he was painting me, calicoes were offered to him. I tried to get my share. Later, when dancing, someone would motion to us that an offering was to be made. The first ones there would get the best, and they shared with the others.

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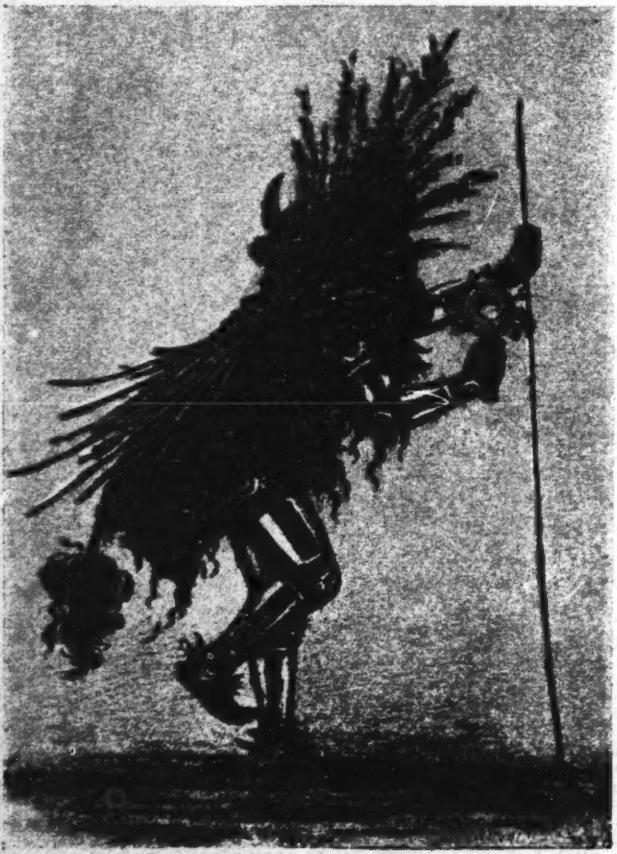

FIG. 21.—Okipa ceremony impersonator: Bull Dancer. (After Catlin.)

In painting us they left a space open on the chest which the masks would cover, otherwise our body was painted red and white stripes crosswise over the abdomen. We had black noses and foreheads. The mask over our heads nearly covered our faces. I held the hair from the mask with my mouth. They painted red and white stripes on our legs and arms. We wore buffalo long hair around our ankles. Each of us wore a belt cut from an old robe. Painting was slow, for it was fancy work. I stood there so long I became tired. Big Turtle brought

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•796 the sacred pipe for me to smoke, but he would not let me touch it with my hands while smoking.

When the painting was finished, Big Turtle told the singers to get ready to go outside. Short Bull, Bites the Nose, and Cedar were the singers. Those with rattles were Little Shield and Clamshell Necklace. They went to the cedar and took their places. About that time men dressed as women (one was White Belly and the other Crazy Raven) appeared. Their faces looked like women's as they had their hair combed like women do. They were short in stature. They wore beautiful dresses made of elk hide decorated with good quillwork. They wore women's leggings and carried sticks with scalps attached. At that time the Foolish One came in from the prairie and jumped around. He jumped over everything, even the holy things, while now and then he would make a motion toward the sun and say that everything was good below. Inside the

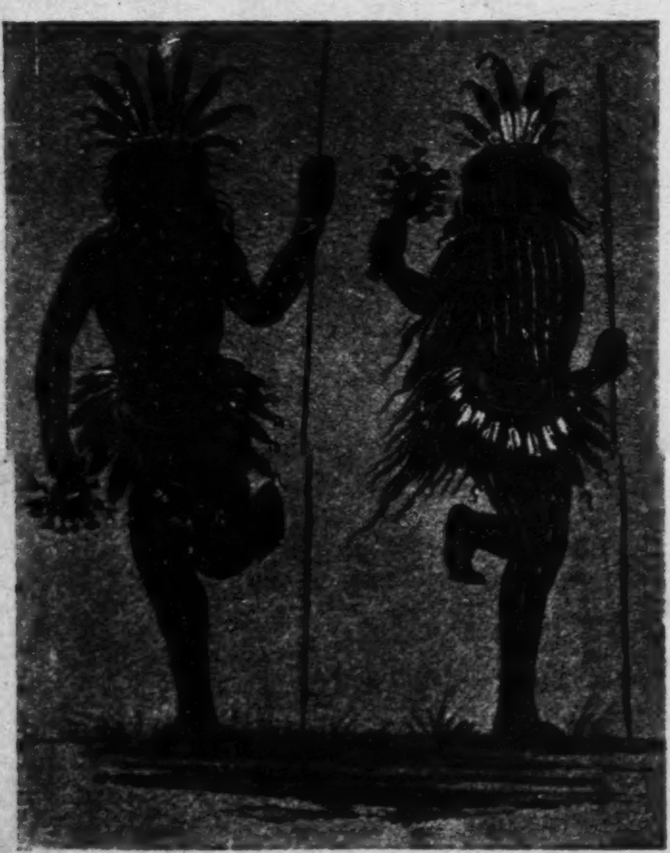

Fig. 22.—Okika ceremony impersonators: Night and First Day of Creation (After Catlin.)

lodge again, Lone Man would get up and ask the Black Bears and Grizzly Bears to go out and see if there were any offerings to them. They would go outside. At the same time the Birds would be walking around watching the Antelopes. The Stars were painted in red with white spots all over. There was one man dressed as Dry Meat, and he would have red marks in different places over his body. 796

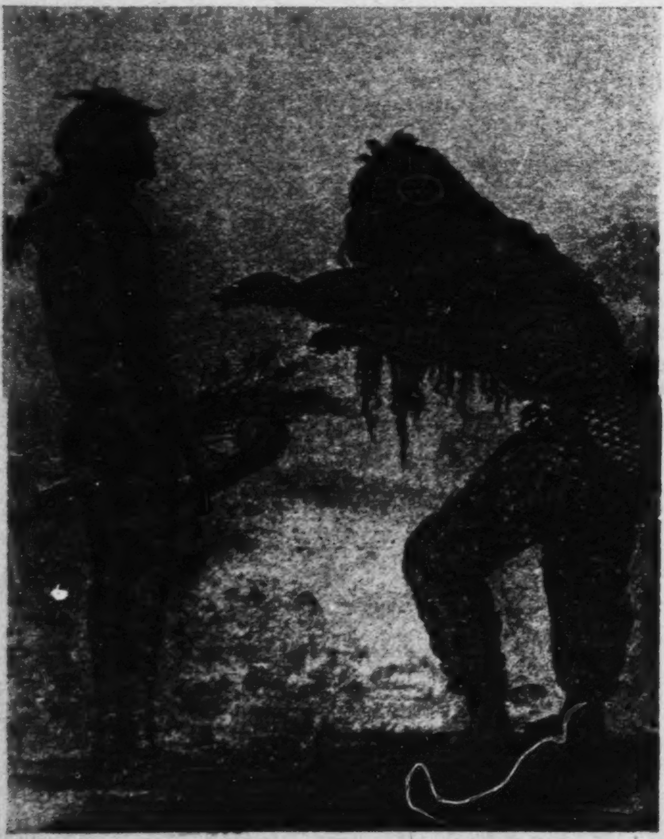

FIG. 23.—Okipa ceremony impersonators: Snake and Beaver. (After Catlin.)

The singers told us to stand in front of them. Lone Man would say something I could not understand, for he used an old Mandan dialect, but afterward I learned that he was saying something which had to do with a cleaning act to make us light and active in dancing. [198]

Then Lone Man said that the singers should begin again. The men with the rattles began and the other singers joined in beating the turtles. It seemed that the earth was shaking. At that time First Creator was gone, but I saw him afterward on the south side of the cedar. All that time, two Women, four Buf-

> faloes, two Stars, Dry Meat, and the other impersonators divided in two rows as they came out and stood on each side of the cedar. The Blue Heron was sitting by the Lone Man in the lodge. He was still there when we returned, for he was not supposed to move until the ceremony was over.
>
> When the singers took the turtles out, they went to the cedar and faced the door with the turtles in front of them. We came out bellowing like the Buffalo Bulls. They all sang at the turtles, and then we went by pairs to each side. One woman impersonator went one way, the other went the other way. I saw the Antelopes being chased by the Birds and running onto the lodges, while the Bears stood by the cedar. First Creator had a coyote hide over his shoulder and was running in circles all the time without stopping. Every time they sang we danced until we met behind the cedar. Those who pretended to be stars said they had to travel slowly like stars. The singers would beat the drums rapidly and the Bulls would dance so violently they were almost exhausted. Still the Stars hardly moved. At times people would make offerings to the Bears, and the Antelopes would try to take the goods away from them. Then the Hawks and Big Birds would come to take the goods away from the Antelopes, hitting them with their clubs. While all this was going on, the Stars hardly moved. If anyone owned the star medicine, he would invite the Stars to come and eat. We always looked around while dancing, but it happened that I did not see it because I was dancing the east direction facing the cedar when someone waved. When I looked around, I saw who it was, but the other Buffaloes got there first and took the food and drygoods. While we ate, we gave the goods to the men who painted us. Our protectors, the Birds, would try to take it away from us. After we finished, the singers took their turtles inside, went around in a circle inside the lodge, and came right back out again. They placed their turtles on the ground again.
>
> Sometimes they would invite us to eat several times. The Stars walked slowly, and we tired, they were so slow. When we went out again, the men impersonating women were in front of us. I rubbed them on both sides, and some of the men said that a Buffalo was after those women, even though I did it only for fun. I saw a man with a sack drawn over his body and painted with blue mud. He had a fork tine in front of him, and every time he came near the Bulls, he would stick it into them, and they would run away. Whenever the people dressed as different characters came out, men with that same medicine would call them and give them a feast. It would not take long after we began to dance until all the paint would be run off.

The dancers came out twelve times the third day.

Throughout the ceremony there had been challenges sent to the Foolish One to come and match his powers with the Lone Man and his pipe. Foolish One symbolized those who did not respect sacred things, and the drama illustrated the unhappy lot of those who failed to fast or seek supernatural protection through purchase or fasting. Just after the performers had completed their first dance on the third day, he appeared on the prairie following a zigzag course to the village. He was scantily clothed, wearing a breechcloth of buffalo hair, a buffalo tail be-

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hind, anklets of buffalo hair, and a small close-fitting cap of buffalo hair with a raven feather in it. He was painted black with white teeth painted around his mouth; a red disk on his chest represented the sun; a red crescent on his back represented the moon; dozens of white circles on the body, limbs, and head represented the stars. He wore a rod and two small pumpkins representing male genitals. His limbs appeared to have holes through them at the joints due to the peculiar manner of painting a red spot with a white circle around it at the desired points. He wore a cornhusk necklace and carried a staff about eight feet long on the end of which hung a ball of buffalo hair which was symbolic of a human head.

As he approached the village, he leaped about in imitation of the Foolish One of the mythology, jumping over any person in his way. Small children had been told that this terrible creature ate people,[27] since he came from the sun, so they hid back of their mothers. Women threw robes toward him, and other men with the right to take the part of the Foolish One followed behind collecting them.

While the Foolish One approached the open circle of the village, the Okipa Maker continued praying at the sacred cedar and did not move from his place until he heard him near by, within the open circle. The Okipa Maker grasped Lone Man's pipe in both hands and, carrying it before him, advanced toward the Foolish One, challenging that one's right to come among the people to frighten them and bring misfortune or death at the hands of their enemies by breaking up the dances for the buffaloes. As he advanced, the singing and dancing stopped, while all looked on attentively at the drama. No person was to utter a sound, and any dog that barked was killed by the Black Mouths. It was believed the tribe's welfare was dependent on the powers of Lone Man's pipe to overcome the power of the Foolish One's staff. The Foolish One retreated before the Okipa Maker, and the people sang the victory songs. It was believed that Lone Man's pipe had saved the people from this evil one who brought death and ill fortune to those who dreamed of him. Foolish One then behaved like a clown and entertained the onlookers by imitating bulls during the breeding season. He ap-

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[27] See chap. xii, "People Above Ceremony," where he is described as a cannibal.

796 proached the young women first. Then he advanced toward the Bulls, dancing around the sacred cedar as though smelling them. Each time the performers came out of the Okipa lodge, Foolish One approached the two men dressed like women, one being sensible, the other foolish. First he approached the sensible girl[28] and by signs told her that he loved her and offered her his cornhusk necklace, but she would refuse to have anything to do with him. Then he directed his attention to the other girl,[29] who gladly accepted his offers. The spectators laughed at this comical performance. He performed during four of the twelve times the dancers came out. At the end of the fourth dance, his staff was broken in entering the Okipa lodge by trying to enter with the rod crosswise of the door. The women, then losing all fear of him, rushed at him, broke his staff into little pieces, and drove him out of the village, pelting him with rocks, dirt, and pieces of wood. He ran to the river, where he washed off his paint while two men, also having Foolish One rights, who had followed him, gathered up the presents and tied up his cap and necklace in a buffalo-calf hide to resemble a doll. This doll was then lashed to a pole before the Okipa lodge to be an offering to the Foolish One who lived in the Sun.

The women brought food for the animals at midday and threw it to them while they danced. The food for the Bull Dancers was kept in an earth lodge near by. When the Bulls saw a woman approaching with the hair side of her robe out, they knew their food was ready. All the animal impersonators rushed toward the lodge where the Bulls were to eat, and there was general disorder. The Antelopes, being faster runners than the Buffaloes, who were burdened with the masks and willows, reached the door first. Two men, one painted to represent a large hawk, the other a bald eagle, were stationed on each side of the doorway with stone hammers to keep the Antelopes out, but some usually got in.

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785 Fasters began presenting themselves to be tortured when the dancers had come out the fifth time. A long pole had been rigged up south of the sacred cedar, and a faster was fastened to the

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[28] She represented Corn Silk, who went above to marry the Moon, as well as all the other kindly female deities.

[29] She represented Cheyenne Woman, who married the Sun.

lariat hanging down from the top of the pole by means of 796
skewers through his chest. He ran around this pole for the duration 785
of one appearance of the dancers and was then cut loose.[30] A different faster was attached to the pole each time that the Bull Dancers were outside dancing.

The two men representing the night or stars led the dancers on their last appearance on the third day, taking very short steps so that they scarcely moved along, and timed the dance to finish just as the first evening star (*no'hąka tawi'hąka*, or "grandson") appeared after sunset. The two men at dusk returned to the Okipa lodge and spent the night in places just back of the Okipa Maker.

There were usually a number of women fasting on top of the entrance to the Okipa lodge. They came there the first night and left at sunset of the third day. These women sought various benefits; some sought relief for illness; others sought success for relatives about to leave or then away from home on the warpath.

Fourth day: "The Hunting Day."—All those who had gone 796
through the torture feature on the second and third days left the Okipa lodge the night before the fourth day. There were only four Bull Dancers on this day who were men selected because of their great size and bravery in battle. The Bulls were painted and dressed as on the preceding days. Young men brought fresh willows from the sand bars to decorate the Okipa lodge. Those who were to impersonate the hunters prepared willow hoops with rawhide lacing across them and poles, such as were used in the Hoop and Pole game, which they took into the Okipa lodge to use in the hunting rites.

The fasters did not come out for the first dance on the fourth day; only the Okipa Maker, the drummers, the rattlers, and the four Bull Dancers appeared to dance four times before returning to the Okipa lodge. The Bulls came out once for each of the

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[30] This account of the Okipa was supplied in part by Scattercorn, to whom her father, Moves Slowly, described the ceremony as held in his boyhood. She tells me that when her father was young the torturing was done in the medicine lodge and no pole was set up outside. The use of a pole suggests Hidatsa NaxpikE influence. Maximilian, as reported in *Early Western Travels, 1748–1846*, ed. Thwaites, XXIII, 332, says that some hung over a bank. Boller (*op. cit.*, p. 104) reports a pole was put up south of the sacred cedar.

796 clans on the last day, and the clan names were recited in the ritual.[31]

796 The Okipa Maker and the remaining fasters underwent various tortures on the last day just before the Bull Dancers came 785 out the final time. Often there were not more than two fasters remaining with the Okipa Maker, and at times the Okipa Maker was the only one left to be tortured. Two men of the father's clan pierced the flesh for the skewers and suspended the candidates above the ground. Buffalo skulls were hung from their legs. A man who had killed an enemy could wear an enemy's skull around his neck. When a faster became unconscious, he was taken down.

796 After the sixteenth dance, one of the drummers came out with rattles made of buffalo hide, followed by the four Bulls, who danced in a weaving course around the sacred cedar. The Hoita came last with two gourd rattles. The dancers, when on the east side of the cedar, addressed the song to Mother Corn as mother, then went to the west side to address the song to Thunderbird as father,[32] after which all retired to the Okipa lodge.

Inside the lodge four songs were sung. These were the songs used when repairing the sacred cedar. After each song the turtles were lifted to determine how heavy they were, and each time the turtles were moved all the young men in the lodge stamped their feet in imitation of the buffalo herds which had also stamped on being released from the Dog Den Butte.

After the turtles had been moved four times, with the stamping of feet accompanying each move, the time for the "freeing of the animals" and the "animal hunt" had come.[33] The Hoita led the way from the Okipa lodge, carrying Lone Man's pipe. The drummers followed, carrying the three turtles which they placed in their customary place east of the sacred cedar. The Four Bulls followed Hoita, who in turn led the hunters with their poles and hoops. Hoita took the Okipa Maker's place 796 south of the cedar, and the Bulls stood in a row south of him. All the hunters formed in a line south of the Bulls, and Lone Man stood alone south of the hunters. The participants faced the entrance of the Okipa lodge. The Bulls danced toward Hoita, who sent them back four times, symbolizing the four times scouts were sent from Dog Den Butte to report on the condition of the Mandan whom Hoita believed to be starving. Each time the hunters, using the poles as spears, charged the Bulls, who were bleeding from many wounds. Wolf Chief explained that it was a very painful performance, as his legs were pierced in many places.

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[31] Six extinct clans were dropped from these rites while performing the ceremony at the Fort Clark villages.

[32] Many of the songs have words that are not understood. In this song only the words "Thunderbird Father" and "Mother Corn Mother" were recognized by the uninformed.

[33] In the mythology, when Hoita came from Dog Den Butte, where he had the animals imprisoned, and found his son officiating in Lone Man's village, he agreed to free the animals so that the people could hunt them and resolved that in the future he would work with Lone Man for the benefit of the tribe. Thereafter the two men assisted each other in directing the Okipa ceremony.

After the hunt, the Four Bulls stood at the entrance to the Okipa lodge and formed at the four cardinal points. Each bellowed in imitation of a bull in the following order, east, west, north, and south. Then the Hoita directed them to the sacred cedar, where each of the Bulls stood at the cardinal points and again bellowed, in the same order.[34] The Four Bulls represented the buffaloes from every direction as well as the buffaloes for the four seasons. The north buffalo called for the winter buffalo, the east buffalo for the spring buffalo, the south buffalo for the summer buffalo, and the west buffalo for the autumn buffalo.

After the calling of the buffaloes from the four directions was 796 completed, the remaining portion of the ceremony progressed 785 rapidly. The drummers began beating rapidly, and the hunters formed a circle about the sacred cedar, holding to the willow hoops. The Four Bulls threw off their masks and danced around the circle as rapidly as possible. Each remaining faster was led out of the Okipa lodge by two of his father's clansmen[35] who had the right half of their bodies painted blue and the left side red. They held straps wrapped around the faster's arms. Each faster had one or more buffalo skulls dragging from skewers fastened through the skin; those who had struck an enemy were permitted to wear a skull as a necklace. The father's clansmen led or

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[34] The sacred cedar represented Lone Man's body, and this act symbolized the eternal friendship of Lone Man and Hoita.

[35] Only men of good war records, who were entitled to paint as indicated above, could participate. The painting of the body in two colors, blue on the right side and red on the left side or comparable painting of leggings and shirt, indicated that one had killed an enemy far from home or had been the first or second to strike a lone enemy far from home.

•796 dragged the young man around the sacred cedar in a clockwise
direction as fast as they could travel until the victim fell
785 unconscious. When the last faster fell to the ground, the drumming ceased, and the hunters threw their hoops into the air. All the fasters returned to the Okipa lodge, where those on the west-side moiety rubbed their wounds with buffalo marrow while those of the opposite moiety rubbed theirs with ground yellow corn.

The Lone Man carried all the knives and sharp-edged tools to
796 the bank of the Missouri River, where they were thrown into the water as an offering to the Grandfather Snake. A few robes and seven corn balls were offered to the river at the same time.

A sweat ceremony, in which all the officers with their paraphernalia took part, completed the ceremony.

The goods collected by the Okipa Maker were given to the Lone Man, Hoita, Bulls, Drummers, Rattlers, to the characters represented during the "Everything Comes Back Day," and to the father's clansmen who prepared the Okipa Maker for the last ordeal. The Okipa Maker and the fasters made medicine bundles according to instructions received from the supernatural beings which had appeared to them during the ceremony, and each faster received a section of a sand-bar willow as an article for his personal medicine bundle.

The following description of the Okipa ceremony by Maximilian in 1834 will illustrate the character of the ceremony as performed at that time. Three years later smallpox killed roughly 80 per cent of the tribe, but the ceremony as described by eyewitnesses underwent only a few minor changes. The number of singers was reduced to three; a torture pole was erected south of the sacred cedar; the Bull Dancers were painted differently, the abdomen being painted with alternate stripes; there were fewer animal representatives on the third day due to the extinction of certain bundle lines. Except for these minor changes, the ceremony was essentially the same as performed in 1834. When the Mandan joined the Hidatsa at Like-a-Fishhook Village, men of the latter tribe sometimes gave the ceremony and bought minor offices, but the principal officers were Mandans. The supernatural beings enumerated by Maximilan are also readily identified from my informant's accounts.

on war expeditions, and during the summer buffalo hunt. Of 787
these four, only during one, the Okipa ceremony, was fasting 864
done within the village. This is in sharp contrast with the Hidatsa
custom of fasting during many bundle-transfer ceremonies. 785
Crows Heart preferred to fast away from the village, thinking
that women were less inclined to conform to tribal custom,
which made dreams hard to get.

A man who advised and instructed his own sons in the benefits 785
to be attained from fasting would be abusive with his sister's 869
sons whom he did not believe were making enough effort to secure
supernatural guardians. He would use the argument that 796
it would enhance the prestige of the clan. He would talk of an 614
occasion when other young men would be fasting in the Okipa and
state that he would expect the "younger brother" to be there,
and he would give him goods to pay the officers for that privilege.
The older male members of the various clans were especially
watchful to see that the sections reserved for the clans
were well filled. The other clans laughed at those who had only
a few fasting during the ceremony.

Not all who fasted either alone beyond the village limits or 785
during the Okipa did so with the expectation of having a vision.
Nor were visions received each time. Self-privation was believed 787
to please the supernatural, and both individual and general well-being
was the natural consequence. Although boys began to fast
at the age of eight or nine because they were advised to, the
serious seeking of guardian spirits or vision experiences was not
made until the property-owning age was reached and shortly
after marriage.

Three methods were employed in gaining supernatural experiences. 785
Some would fast in various ways; others would inflict 787
torture; and still others would make presents of valued property.
Of the three, offering of valued goods was considered the hardest 431
to do, since it required much work to amass the goods.

Self-torture administered during the Okipa ceremony was 785
more severe than that practiced in any of the Hidatsa ceremonies; 171
otherwise the customs of the two tribes differed little as
to severity of the measures employed. The father's clansmen
prepared the young man for the torture feature by securing and
inserting the thongs. Suspension of the one tortured was not em-

Chapter VI

THE CORN CEREMONIES

THE Corn ceremonies were of two general groups based on their mythological backgrounds. Either because of purchase or other factors, possibly village union, the two separate ceremonies were consolidated during the memory of the older Mandan. One ceremony which was represented by two bundles was believed to have been performed when the tribe resided under the ground near the mouth of the Mississippi. In this land beneath the earth, the people lived a simple life, depending on corn for their sustenance. They were naked and had neither pottery nor bows and arrows. Their spiritual leader was Corn Father, who, by performing certain rites, caused the seed to germinate and grow, producing the mature plants and ripe corn. The whole tribe relied on him for supernatural guidance. The growing plant was a symbol of his power, and it was believed that the seed would not grow without his rites.

When the people began to come to the surface of the earth by means of a grape vine, the leader of the Corn ceremonies was at the back of the line and was separated from his three sons, Good Furred Robe, Cornhusk Earrings, and Uses His Head for Rattle, and a daughter named Waving Corn Stalk, when the vine was broken by the weight of a woman heavy with child. Calling to his children who had reached the earth, he instructed them to continue the rites as they had seen him perform them. The ceremonial myth from that point traces out the traditional migrations of the tribe, the acquisition of new tools and skills, and the founding of the Black Mouth and Goose societies. In the myth, Good Furred Robe, being the oldest brother, took the leading part. This myth was closely interwoven with the Okipa myth.[1]

After the tribe had completed its migrations and had reached

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[1] See Creation Myth narrated by Chief to his son-in-law, Wolf Chief (chap. iv).

● 796 773 778 After the tribe had completed its migration and had reached the Heart River region, the three brothers died. Good Furred Robe never married, but, before he died, he sold his sacred robe and pipe to his brother's son, who preserved it as a sacred bundle belonging to the Corn ceremonies. The three brothers' skulls were taken from the scaffolds and kept in a leather bag as a second Corn ceremony bundle.

778 The Sacred Robe bundle contained the following articles: (1) a robe said to have belonged to Good Furred Robe, on which was painted a map of the world showing the Missouri River as a large snake and the hole through which the Corn People reached the earth; (2) Good Furred Robe's pipe, carved from wood, the stem being carved to represent a goose's head and neck, the mouthpiece being the goose's bill; (3) a headdress of foxskins; (4) a bundle of young white sage; (5) moccasins made of buffalo hide with the hair on the inside; (6) a clay pot; (7) a strip of elkhide; (8) a dried gourd for a rattle; (9) a substance resembling and representing corn silk; (10) one ear of white flint corn, one ear of yellow corn, and one ear of white soft corn; (11) a narrow strip of badger skin; (12) blackbird heads and the head of one green-headed duck; (13) a whitetail deer skull with antlers attached to place the bundle on; (14) three dried squash; (15) one sunflower head; (16) a robe made of kit-fox hides; and (17) a braid of cornhusks.

796 773 <778 The ceremonial significance of many of the articles in the bundle are self-evident, particularly Items 8, 9, 10, 14, and 15, since these are products from the gardens. The robe was made from a buffalo heifer's hide. Scattercorn explained that such hides, especially those killed in the late fall, had beautiful hair. The paintings on the hide depicted the traditional migration of the tribe from the mouth of the Mississippi and expressed the close association of the tribe with the Missouri River section of the Plains. The Missouri River was depicted as a huge snake. The robe was believed to have supernatural powers over the weather, and those who wished to have rain for their crops paid the robe-owner to open the bundle and sprinkle water on the robe. He would sing the "Song of the Robe" while sprinkling the robe with water shaken from a bundle of white sage (Item 4 of the bundle). The robe was considered the most important ar-

ticle in the bundle and was believed to have once belonged to 796
Good Furred Robe, who wore it during the various Corn rites. 778

The pipe differed little from other ceremonial pipes. The 773
bowl and part of the stem were carved from wood. There appeared to be a stone or clay lining to the bowl. A second piece of wood was carved to resemble a goose's head and neck. This pipe was owned by Good Furred Robe and, according to tradition, used by him in the ceremonies.

The headdress of foxskins (Item 3), badger fur (Item 11), kit-fox robe (Item 16), and strip of elkhide (Item 7) were represented in the bundle because these animals assisted in bringing the people out of the ground.

The sage belonging to the bundle was the kind kept in all [515]
earth lodges and used by the women at the close of a day's work in the gardens to cleanse themselves by rubbing their body and clothing with it. It was said that, in ancient times, worms and diseases were removed by this simple household cleansing rite.

The dried gourd, used as a rattle, was symbolic of Good Furred Robe's brother, Uses His Head for Rattle, who had assisted in the early Corn ceremonies. The [illegible] cornhusks represented the other brother, Cornhusk Earrings, while all the other articles representing products from the garden were symbolic of Waving Corn Stalk, their sister, who repelled the Sun by walking through the gardens waving her robe, thus protecting her gardens from the heat.

The blackbird heads, duck head, and deer skull have a dual symbolic significance. They represent the birds that come north in the spring and the deer that inhabit the woodlands, but they are also the helpers of Old Woman Who Never Dies. In that sense the bundle ritualism is psychologically related to the Old Woman Who Never Dies bundles and rites.

The second traditionally related Corn ceremony bundle is known as the Skull bundle (see Fig. 24). The contents of this bundle are: (1) Good Furred Robe's skull; (2) Cornhusk Earring's skull; (3) Uses Head for Rattle's skull; (4) a bundle of young white sage; (5) a substance resembling and representing corn silk; (6) a headdress of foxskins; and (7) a wooden pipe.

At the time this study was being made, Scattercorn was own- 778
er of the Robe bundle and Mrs. White Duck (Rattles Medicine) 796

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owned the Skull bundle. The former was a Mandan woman of the Nuptadi band, and the latter was a descendant of the small Awaxawi band of Hidatsa. Scattercorn had been told by her father that a long time ago the two bundles belonged to one man and were kept together. They were inherited together, generation after generation, until one owner had two sons who wanted the Corn ceremony rights when the bundle was divided, one taking the robe and the other the skulls. Eventually the Skull bundle was taken to a west-side village of the Heart River group, where it remained until the smallpox epidemic of about 1782, when it was brought northward by the Mandan, finally becoming the principal Corn ceremony bundle of Mi'tutanka Village, where it was owned by a Mandan named Red Bird at the time of the smallpox epidemic of 1837.

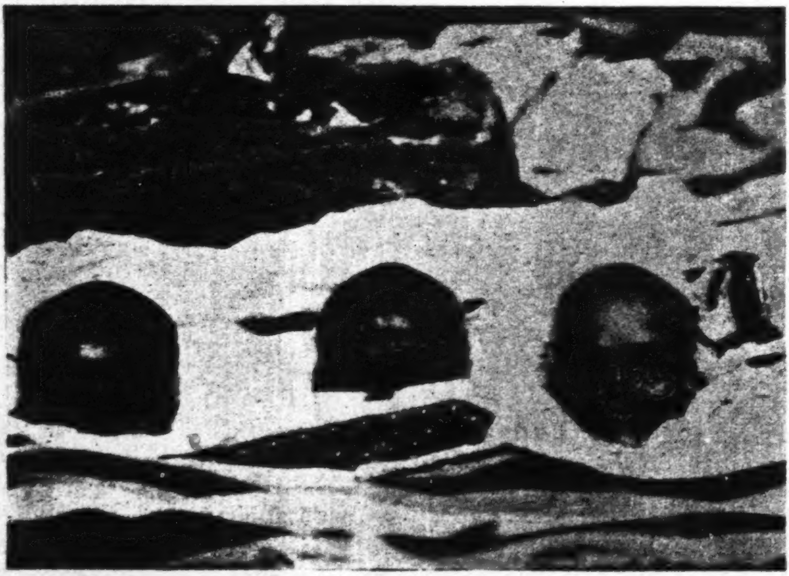

FIG. 24.—Skull bundle of the Corn ceremonies. Characters: Good Furred Robe Cornhusk Earring, and Uses Head for Rattle.

The Robe bundle belonged to the east-side Mandan who migrated from the Round Lodge and Yellow Earth villages and established a village between Mi'tutanka and the Knife River Hidatsa villages. The bundle became associated with the Nup-

tadi band of Mandan. Immediately after the smallpox epidemic 796
of 1837, both bundles were kept at Nuptadi but had different 778
owners. Crows Belt owned the Robe bundle and Red Bird owned the Skull bundle. A year after the smallpox epidemic, Red Bird lost a son from smallpox and contemplated putting the bundle away on the hills, the customary method of relinquishing an unsold bundle, when his son-in-law, Bear Looks Around, an Awaxawi, indicated a desire to purchase the bundle.[2]

The Mandan who owned rights in all the Corn ceremonies met and approved the transfer, since at that time there was considerable intertribal marriage and the principal Mandan Corn bundle containing Good Furred Robe's robe was not involved in the sale. Bear Looks Around bought the bundle, which he later transferred to his "younger brother" (sister's son), Poor Wolf, who transferred it to Mrs. White Duck, his daughter, the present owner.

The Robe bundle was transferred from Crows Belt to Moves Slowly, last head of the Corn ceremonies at Like-a-Fishhook Village. Having no "younger brother," and since no male of his clan indicated a desire to purchase the bundle, he sold his rights to his daughter, Scattercorn.[3] She lost the robe and most of the bundle when their earth lodge burned but saved the pipe. She replaced part of the bundle but not the robe.

A second group of somewhat more complicated Corn ceremonies was associated with Old Woman Who Never Dies bundles. Four groups of bundles belonged to these rites. They were:

1. *Principal bundles.*—These consisted of a large number of articles symbolic of characters and objects referred to in the Old Woman Who Never Dies myth. There was no full bundle in existence at the time of this study. Information was supplied largely by Scattercorn and supplemented by isolated bits of information from a number of informants whose families owned secondary bundles associated with the principal bundles and containing varying numbers of articles similar to those in the principal bundles. From this scattered information, the inform- [616
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[2] Father-in-law to son-in-law or older brother to younger brother constitute moiety inheritance when moieties are exogamous.

[3] Scattercorn died in 1940. Her rights in the Corn ceremony were transferred to Mrs. Little Owl, a clan daughter.

●796 778 ants were in full agreement on some points. They stated that those with singer rights in the Old Woman Who Never Dies bundles were singers for the Women's Goose Society and that greater emphasis was placed on warfare rites. There was no reference in the Robe and Skull myths or rites to warfare except in the incident when Good Furred Robe founded the Black Mouth or Brave Warrior Society and gave a sunflower plant to each of the two bravest men, who were to carry them on war expeditions. The following articles were contained in a principal bundle: corn basket, elkskin robe, clay pot, wooden pipe, deer skull and antlers, corn, beans, squash, sunflowers, blackbird heads, bull-snake skin, bundle of young white sage, duck heads, swan feathers, goose heads, strip of grizzly-bear skin, gourd rattles, and a scalp. Owners of principal bundles held singer status. Bobtail Bull, so far as it was possible to determine, was the only Mandan with this status surviving the smallpox epidemic of 1837.

778 425 432 2. *Secondary bundles.*—Those holding secondary bundle rights were exceedingly numerous. Such bundles were hereditary in character but followed two distinct patterns. For instance, a qualified individual wishing to buy the Snake rites from Old Woman Who Never Dies bundles could either purchase rights from a Snake bundle-owner or could go to a principal bundle-owner and make the purchase. The purchase pattern was the same in both instances. White Calf purchased his Snake bundle from his parents, although his father was dead at the time of the transfer, and Bears Ghost bought from his father, Foolish Chief. On the other hand, Bobtail Bull sold the Snake rites to his son-in-law from a principal bundle.[4] He could do that without subdividing the bundle, since four sales were permissible. Bear bundles could be transferred or made up in the same manner. Men or women either could buy individually or could purchase jointly. There was a difference between group purchases instituted by a man from that of a female purchase. When a man bought, his wives, sisters, and brothers could purchase jointly. However, when a woman initiated the purchase, her sisters, brothers, and their wives could purchase jointly, but the husband could

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[4] There was a tendency to sell secondary bundles to sons, whereas clan inheritance by transfer to a sister's son or a son-in-law was generally practiced for original or principal tribal bundles.

not participate in the transfer or hold rights in the bundle. The 778
desire to own one of these secondary bundles could come either 425
from vision instruction or from a sense of responsibility to per-
petuate the parents' bundles. When vision instructed, sale was 432
made by an owner of the father's clan having rights in a bundle; otherwise the vision recipient could make up a bundle according to the instructions received in the dream. In the latter case, although having as a personal god one of the characters represented in the Old Woman Who Never Dies rites, he was not considered qualified to attend Corn ceremonies and receive gifts.

3. *Composite bundles.*—This was the result of incorporation of 796
Old Woman Who Never Dies rites into the ceremonialism as-
sociated with the Robe bundles. Scattercorn had heard her 778
father say that in former times these were separate ceremonies. 554
Crows Belt did not have rights in the Old Woman Who Never Dies ceremony. After the death of Bobtail Bull, Moves Slowly bought Crows Belt's Robe bundle and proceeded to purchase rights in additional ceremonies pertaining to garden crops, thereby building up a reputation as leader in all of the Corn ceremonies. Whereas some men acquired status in warfare, others rose to prominence by purchasing ceremonial bundles. Crows Heart thought that one was about as hard to do as the other. Buying into the ceremonies required a great deal of material wealth which had either to be prepared or bought. It is interesting to observe a parallelism between the records of Moves Slowly and of Poor Wolf, who purchased the Skull bundle at about the same time as Moves Slowly acquired the Robe bundle. There was always rivalry between the two men, who were at that time living at Like-a-Fishhook Village. Moves Slowly was eligible to inherit the Skull bundle, since his grandfather through the male line had owned rights in the bundle. Bear Looks Around bought the bundle before Moves Slowly was old enough to make the purchase. Crows Belt, who had no legitimate heir, sold the Robe bundle to Moves Slowly shortly after Poor Wolf secured the Skull bundle from Bear Looks Around. Both undertook the purchase of rights in related ceremonies, and the rivalry became keen in their efforts to build up the reputation of their bundles. Moves Slowly bought Hoita rights in the Okipa, assisted his brother, Bear on the Water, in

• 796 778 554 buying their father's Holy Woman bundle, learned to bring down the spirits in a sleight-of-hand act, learned how to find lost articles, and had every god pertaining to corn as his personal guardian. Poor Wolf (Awaxawi) acquired Earthmaking, River, Old Woman Who Never Dies, Imitating Buffalo, Painted Red Stick, and Eagle-trapping bundles. Both were singers in the Women's Goose societies. For twenty years these two men were rivals because Poor Wolf acquired the Skull bundle which legitimately should have gone to Moves Slowly. When this rivalry ended, no other men owned rights in so many ceremonies as these men. Poor Wolf consolidated the Old Woman Who Never Dies bundle and River bundle with the Skull bundle for the Corn ceremonies, but the others were kept separate. Moves Slowly did likewise. Moves Slowly had the right to give out seed in the Spring Fertility ceremony, but Poor Wolf could not do this, since Bear Looks Around had failed to buy that right of Red Bird, and there were none to purchase from except Moves Slowly, whose price no doubt would have been high to a rival. Moves Slowly enjoyed exclusive authority in the Spring Fertility rites of distributing sacred seed corn, two kernels being given to each women, who paid him for thus assuring her that the seed she planted would germinate.

During middle age these two men worked hard and were poor in material wealth, since it took all they could acquire to perform the bundle transfers, but their wealth measured in social status and ceremonial lore grew until each became an authority on the traditional history of his respective group. Both were selected as village or peace chiefs of their respective tribes.

796 778 4. *Sacred pot ceremonies.*[5]—Two large clay pots were a part of the Old Woman Who Never Dies ceremony at Nuptadi Village when that group lived above Burnt Creek on the east side of the Missouri River. The information that reached Scattercorn through her father indicated that the ceremony was one of rainmaking. People would pay to have the ceremony given, at which time the pots were taken out. These pots were said to have been given to the Nuptadi by Old Woman Who Never Dies with the understanding that, whenever they were used, her image would

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[5] See my "Hidatsa Ceremonial Life" for an account of the Hidatsa version of this ceremony.

be erected before the Okipa lodge, where the ceremony was 796
held. One pot was symbolic of the Old Woman and the other 778
represented her husband, a large snake. The owner kept them in a storage chamber near the head of his lodge covered with a hide when not in use. Unlike the Awaxawi pots, which were used as drums, the Nuptadi pots were used to prepare food for the feast. When the Sioux destroyed Nuptadi Village after the first smallpox epidemic, the Old Woman Who Never Dies bundle-owner was killed defending his lodge and his bundles which were burned. The other similar bundles did not have these large pots, so these special Mandan rain-making feasts ceased, and they went to Awaxawi Village, where a somewhat similar ceremony was performed, except that the pots were used as drums.

Whenever one paid to have the sacred pots brought out for the rain-making feast, the bundle-owner erected an image of the Old Woman Who Never Dies. This was composed of a pole to which was tied a robe with white sage at the top, leggings, moccasins, a corn-stirring paddle, and a corn basket so arranged as to resemble a person.

The following account indicates the native theory of the 796
function of the corn bundles in Mandan religious life. 778

SCATTERCORN'S NARRATIVE OF CORN BUNDLES 159

The Robe bundle-owner[6] prays each year for good crops, but people lately have not followed the rules of the tribe, so the crops are unusually poor. Only wooden pipes can be used in these ceremonies. A few years ago at Mandan, Crows Heart was asked to officiate in the pageant representing the first meeting of the Mandans with the whites. Someone at Mandan, not knowing our ways, gave him a red pipe to use. He offered smoke to the four directions, and that night all our gardens froze.

I bought my rights in this bundle from my father, Moves Slowly, when he grew old and his eyes were poor. I was the first woman to own one of these bundles, for the bundle usually went to the oldest son.[7] People dreaming of the things grown in the garden or of the animals and birds associated with corn asked my father to officiate when a feast was given to their medicine. At such

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[6] The Robe bundle is possibly the best of all the tribal bundles known to students of Mandan culture. George F. Will and George E. Hyde in *Corn among the Indians of the Upper Missouri* (St. Louis, Mo., 1917), pp. 244, 262-68, relate in considerable detail the function of the Mandan Corn Priest. O. G. Libby, secretary of the North Dakota Historical Society, has prepared a painting of the thirty-three owners of the bundle, of which Moves Slowly is the last, and secured much information on the history of the bundle.

[7] Informant has, no doubt, been influenced by Hidatsa customs. See above where actual inheritance is given as taken from genealogies.

●796 times he painted a picture of the plant or animal dreamed of on a robe for the
person giving the feast; for this service he was paid robes, horses, or blankets.

778 He was the head singer in the Goose Women's ceremony and was the own-
159 er of the songs addressed to the Old Woman Who Never Dies, but he bought
those extra. In the spring, the Goose Women's Society danced under his direction, and he supervised the sale of the society to the younger women; he officiated in the ceremonial transfer of the holy objects belonging to the society.

[787] Someone during the winter always dreamed that the corn crop would be
large if he or she put on a feast to the corn. The one having the vision then
796 sent word by someone of his father's clan to ask the Corn bundle-owner to
take charge. The giver prepared robes and food. At the appointed time, which
778 was when the waterbirds came north, all those with rights met. Participating
241 were the Corn bundle-owner, all those with the medicine of garden products
or associated animals and birds, the Black Mouth Men's Society, and Goose Women's Society. The Corn bundle was carried into the earth lodge and opened at the entrance to the sweat lodge, where it was laid out on a deer skull and elkskin. Songs were addressed to the Corn Bundle People who came out of the ground; additional songs were addressed to the Old Woman Who Never Dies. Only four stones were used in the sweat, each one representing one of the Sun's visits to Waving Corn Stalk. The stones were our enemies just as the Sun had been. The giver of the ceremony named four enemies he wished to conquer while the stones were taken into the sweat lodge. Those entering the sweat lodge imitated the geese and waterbirds while the Corn bundle-owner sang his four songs. Those not entering the sweat lodge were sprinkled with water dipped from the clay vessel belonging to the bundle. Corn and beans often came up into peoples throats while the ceremony was in progress; those people danced and rubbed their throats with sage to put the objects back down. Food was served to the Corn bundle and then to the guests.

The giver of the ceremony gave each person attending a robe or present and received in return a prayer for the giver's success. When the ceremony was completed, an image of the Old Woman Who Never Dies was made from an elk robe and lashed to a pole in front of the giver's lodge.

The Corn bundle-owner was expected to ask the help of the spirits who sent good crops. In the spring before seeding time, he held the ceremony of cleansing the seeds so that they would germinate. Early on the appointed day he went to the top of his earth lodge where he faced to the south singing the Corn bundle songs to call the spirits of the corn back from the south. He held a vessel containing shelled corn. Each woman making a garden came to him and received two seeds of each kind of corn, beans, sunflowers, and squash, paying for them and the prayers he addressed to his gods. Payment was made in elk robes, blankets, and other clothing.

The Corn bundle-owner underwent numerous taboos while the crops were
778 growing. Owners of minor Corn bundles prepared his food beginning four days
241 before the cleansing of the seed. When the previous year's crop was poor, he
lived apart from all women until the crop was ripe and the seed corn for the
784 next season had been gathered. He painted his body red and wore moccasins
of buffalo hide with the hair on the inside. He wore a robe all summer long. He was not permitted to eat plums, berries, or corn. All the people of the tribe knew that after the cleansing ceremony the restrictions went into effect and were careful not to violate any of the rules lest the crop fail. Each woman kept

a bunch of sage in her lodge and rubbed her body after returning from the 778
fields to cleanse herself from the spirits in the gardens. Years ago, it is said 241
that, when this was done, worms came out of the women's bodies. The Corn 784
bundle-owner walked through the gardens several times during the summer,
carrying the pipe and singing the Corn songs.

When the weather was too hot, too cold, or too dry, all those with Corn 796
medicine rights met, and the Goose Women's Society joined them to dance
and pray. While the ceremony was in progress, people of each household 782
brought presents and offered them for relief from the adverse weather. 778

Many women pledged a ceremony to the Corn if good crops were sent by 241
the gods. A person making such a vow, first prepared an elkhide robe and paid the Corn Priest to officiate. When the time appointed for the offering came and after the crop was harvested, she carried the robe to her field, where she tied it to a cottonwood pole and covered the pole with corn on the ear until the pile reached nearly to the robe. The young men of the tribe were invited to come and charge the robe, the first one there taking it. At a signal, the young men searched for the meat under the pile of corn. The Corn bundle-owner received four things for his part in the ceremony. Many different women gave this ceremony each fall when the crops were abundant.

The Corn bundle-owner officiated whenever corn was sold to people of 778
other tribes. It was thought that it must be done or the spirits in the corn [439]
might leave the Mandan and help the people who took the corn away. He
dressed in his ceremonial outfit and "called back" the Corn Spirits.

Whenever a cache of stored corn was opened, four ears of corn were taken [251]
to the Corn bundle-owner as payment for his part in protecting the stored
corn.

The order of Corn Priests is as follows:

1. Uses Head for Rattle
2. Brown
3. Pot
4. Bull Leg
5. Acting Foolish (OxinhEdE)
6. Foolish Man
7. Strong Arm
8. Raises Tail
9. Forearm Bone
10. Hunts His Enemy
11. Bull Standing on Land
12. WErukirihEri
13. Enemy
14. Sacred Cedar
15. Cedar Feather
16. Star
17. Head Comes Out
18. Water Bag
19. Coyote
20. Crow
21. WErukirihEri
22. Bloody Knife
23. Garden
24. Tree in Garden
25. Uses His Head for Rattle
26. HoxdEkE
27. Corn Grinder
28. Lying Down
29. Left-Hand Bull
30. Scabby
31. WErukirihEri
32. Crows Belt
33. Moves Slowly
34. Scattercorn
35. Mrs. Little Owl (present owner)

The many references to corn in the mythology express the 241
significance of agriculture to this tribe. Archeological work in 361
their prehistoric sites indicates that economically agriculture
has played an important role in shaping the habits of these 796
people. The primary factor in establishing villages at certain

241 361 796 points was the accessibility to desirable corn grounds. With the prominent place of agriculture in the economic life of these people, it was a logical consequence that leaders of the Corn ceremonies should determine sites for new villages. Although the actual site was selected by the Corn bundle-owners, the laying-out of the open circle and location of the sacred cedar and ceremonial lodge was the responsibility of the individuals impersonating Lone Man and Hoita in the Okipa ceremony.

796 From an analysis of traditions and rites retained after the smallpox epidemics something of the nature of the old corn ceremonies could be determined.

1. There was only one Robe bundle, which came from the Nuptadi Village of the east side of the Missouri.

2. The Skull bundle was of west-side origin and came originally from the Awigaxa band, who were last to reach the Upper Missouri.

3. Old Woman Who Never Dies bundles and secondary bundles belonging to this ceremony were found in all Mandan villages and, in fact, in Hidatsa, Awatixa, and Awaxawi villages. The ceremonies and beliefs with few exceptions were identical between villages and tribes. This seems to be an older, widely diffused Mandan-Hidatsa ceremony to which new practices, particularly the fertility or consecration of the seed rites, were added, based mythologically on a dramatization of corn as people coming from the ground.

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CORN MYTH OF THE ROBE BUNDLE
RELATED BY SCATTERCORN[8]

The Corn People were living under the ground by a lake. One day some of the people saw an opening reaching up to the land above, and there was a vine growing in this hole. They asked the Fox to climb up and see this land. He climbed up, but, when he stuck his nose out, he got only a brief look at the beautiful land above because Sun burned his nose.

Then they asked Elk to go up and dig the hole larger with his horns. He made the hole large so the people could get through. The people started up, following the vine. They came up continuously for four days, but on the last day a woman heavy with child broke the vine and ended the migration forever. All these people had been raising the corn on this land beneath the earth.

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[8] For another version of the same myth, apparently also related by Scattercorn, see Will and Hyde, *op. cit.*, pp. 218–23. Also see Frances Densmore, *Mandan and Hidatsa Music* (Bureau of American Ethnology Bull. 80 [1923]), pp. 35–48, for data on Good Furred Robe, including data on Corn Priest, Goose Women Society, and Black Mouth Society.

773 wanted to, so that the people always had meat. He had good luck on the battlefield and could bring rains for the crops.

539 Then he was married. Two sisters were brought to him by their father and mother. (This was the custom in olden times. The parents of children of marriageable age would bring them to some eligible man.)

The boy's grandmother is still living. The people downstream from the Knife River used to follow the river up to her place when on the warpath and eat corn with her. She would tell them now many people they would kill.

She became tired of this because they came too often, so she moved down the river about four miles, then up into the hills to the west where she disappeared. Since then she has been one of the Holy Women connected with corn. She must come back to Short Missouri, as people fasting there during the summer dream of her. Grandson went back to the sky and became one of the large stars.

CORN PIPE CEREMONY

796 ● 778 This ceremony became extinct after 1837 and is remembered only from tradition. The principal article in its bundle was a sacred wooden pipe. The pipe was kept by Blue Snake Woman when her husband and children died during the smallpox epidemic. She surrendered the bundle to a daughter, who sold the pipe to Black Bear, who died a few years ago. The full bundle ritual was not performed after the smallpox epidemic, since those holding rights or acquainted with the ceremony had died.

778 821 The pipe was noted for its supernatural powers in producing winds. It was brought out when the days were warm and sultry to drive away the mosquitoes, so that women would not suffer from their bites while in the gardens. People were not permitted to climb on the lodge in which it was kept. If it was dropped or touched, the wind would blow.

778 773 According to tradition, a woman went to the Missouri River for water when the river was at flood stage. Driftwood was floating down. When she dipped up the water, she saw the pipe and an ear of yellow flint corn together in the water. She took the pipe and corn home and gave them to her husband, who called all the holy men to tell them of her discovery. They were afraid of the pipe because a high wind came up when one dropped it and did not want to keep it. They put it back in the water, thinking it would float on wherever it was going to. The woman found the pipe and corn four times at four different places where they camped. The holy men concluded that, since they had tried to get rid of it but it kept following them, it should be kept. They thought the corn should be divided among the families. In that way yellow flint corn was introduced in the tribe.

Chapter VII

EAGLE-TRAPPING CEREMONY[1]

•796 223 171 CAPTURING eagles from concealed pits[2] was practiced by all tribes of the Northern Plains. So far as our meager information indicates, the technique was essentially the same for a large number of tribes occupying territory adjacent to the Mandan and Hidatsa. Less is known of the ceremonial aspect of the practice, organization of expeditions, values of feathers for decoration, number of leaders, inheritance of rites and skills, or the socioreligious position of its shaman.

Shooting young developed eagles was uncommon, but both Mandan and Hidatsa informants claimed that the Crows made less use of pits, since they lived near the Rocky Mountains, where most of the birds nested and were able to shoot them in trees or near decoys. Such information as the literature gives indicates that all the tribes of the Upper Missouri River Region adjacent to the Mandan and Hidatsa used the pit method of trapping.

In this discussion of eagle-trapping it is proposed to indicate the territory claimed by the Mandan and Hidatsa, the technique of securing birds, mythological background, inheritance of rights to trap, as well as the economic and religious position of leaders in the tribal life.[3]

796 223 346 Eagle-trapping by the Mandan and Hidatsa was confined to the rough lands adjacent to wooded streams. The ceremonial lodge for the men and the wood or hide tepees for the women and children were always erected in sheltered spots among the high trees along streams, while the pits were dug on the top or

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[1] For a detailed account of practices associated with eagle-trapping see Gilbert Livingston Wilson, *Hidatsa Eagle Trapping* ("Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History," Vol. XXX [1929]), pp. 99–245.

[2] For Maximilian's short account of eagle-trapping see Reuben Gold Thwaites (ed.), *Early Western Travels, 1748–1846*, XXIII (Cleveland, 1906), 346.

[3] Eagle-trapping rites and beliefs for both the Mandan and the Hidatsa are treated together in this chapter, since tribal differences were insignificant.

near the top of hills or on benchlands adjacent to the streams 796
(see Figs. 25–27). Of the total area claimed by these two tribes, 223
only a small part of the entire territory was suitable for trapping, 346
and that was confined to narrow sections of river country
(see Fig. 28).

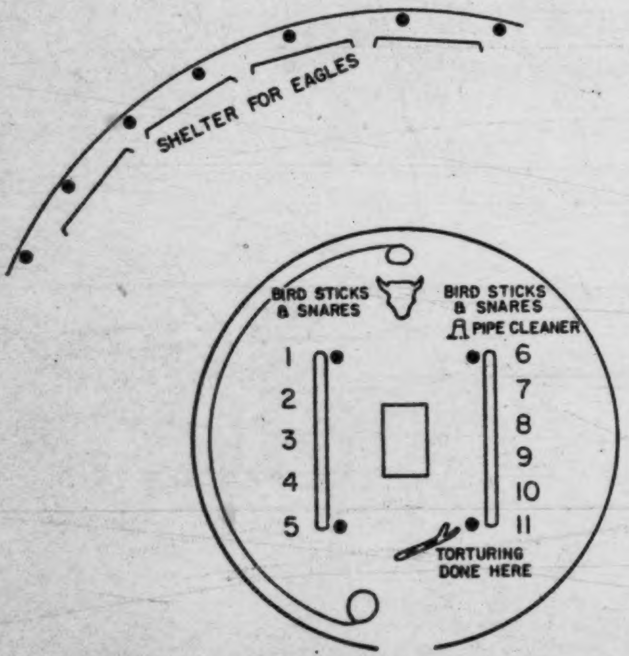

FIG. 25.—Plan of eagle-trapping lodge. *1*, Wolf Eyes—leader (Maxoxati-H); *2*, Big Walker—assistant leader (Tamisik-M); *3*, Little Crow (Low Hat); *4*, Lance-owner (3 clan); *5*, White Body (Maxoxati); *6*, Holding Eagle—Crack Shot (Prairie Chicken); *7*, Little Bull (Knife); *8*, Black Bear (Knife); *9*, Sitting Woman (Prairie Chicken); *10*, Bears Arm (Knife); *11*, Louie Wolf—waiter (Water-buster).

Historic accounts of these two tribes give little information 796
on eagle-trapping, but there are frequent references to their 435
value in trade. The standard price of a good horse was three war bonnets containing a total of one hundred and eight black-tipped feathers, which would be the feathers from nine birds.

Archeological evidence verifies native tradition of the great 796
antiquity of eagle-trapping. In the rough country west of the 223
Missouri River there are thousands of depressions marking the 172
sites of former pits. These pits vary from sharply rectangular

796 forms with rotted sections of the cover still protruding to gently
223 rounded depressions now nearly filled by erosional activity. The
172 number of pits, together with their wide distribution, points to
a universal practice of considerable antiquity.

796 During the century 1770–1870 there was a general northward
223 movement of the Mandan and Hidatsa which was accompanied
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648 [346]

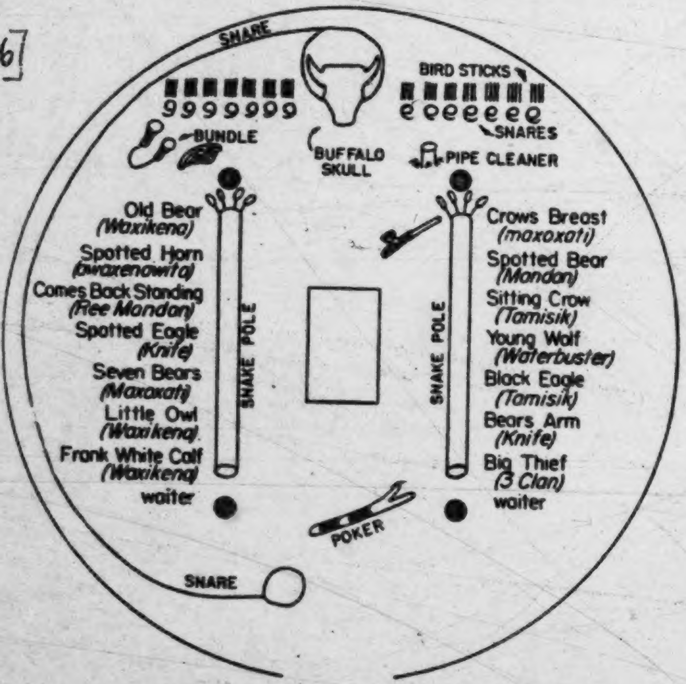
SNARE
BIRD STICKS
BUNDLE
BUFFALO SKULL
SNARES
PIPE CLEANER
Old Bear (Waxikena)
Spotted Horn (awaxenawita)
Comes Back Standing (Ree Mandan)
Spotted Eagle (Knife)
Seven Bears (Maxoxati)
Little Owl (Waxikena)
Frank White Calf (Waxikena)
waiter
SNAKE POLE
SNAKE POLE
Crows Breast (maxoxati)
Spotted Bear (Mandan)
Sitting Crow (Tamisik)
Young Wolf (Waterbuster)
Black Eagle (Tamisik)
Bears Arm (Knife)
Big Thief (3 Clan)
waiter
POKER
SNARE

Fig. 26.—Floor plan of eagle-trapping lodge, Old Bear, leader. Bird sticks: *1*, "Both Ends White"; *2*, "Speckled"; *3*, "Four Stripes"; *4*, "The Young One."

by a shift in eagle-trapping territory. Crows Heart (Mandan), who had been on many trapping expeditions with both Mandan and Hidatsa leaders, stated that the Mandan claimed eagle-trapping rights to the territory on both sides of the Missouri River from Like-a-Fishhook Village to the Yellowstone and along the Little Missouri River to its headwaters. While living in the Heart River region, the Mandan claimed trapping rights to all the rough lands between the Little and Big Missouri rivers as far west as Powder River in Montana. To the south

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[p. 209]

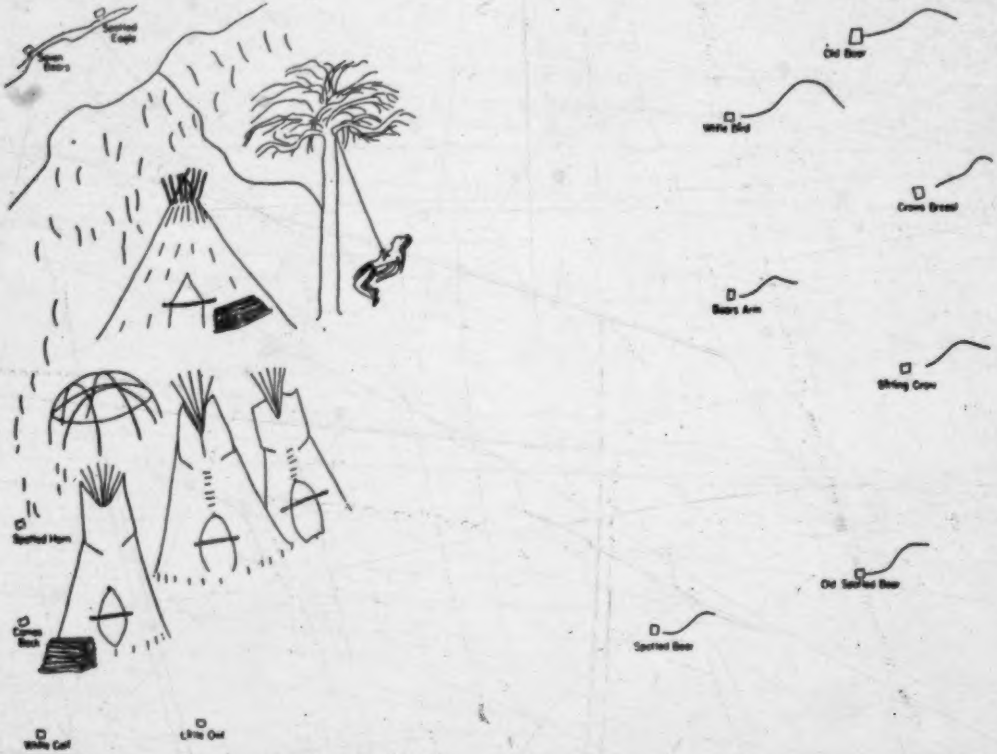
Spotted Eagle
Old Bear
White Bird
Crows Breast
Bears Arm
Sitting Crow
Old Spotted Bear
Spotted Bear
Spotted Horn
White Calf
Little Owl

FIG. 27.—Eagle-trapping camp and pits, Old Bear, leader. (Drawn by Bears Arm to show himself fasting when seventeen years of age.)

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they trapped along the Cannonball River and in the Black Hill region, especially along the north side, which was jointly occupied with the Cheyenne, whom he believed used the same methods and followed the same rituals. He had heard the old men say that it was understood that the eagle-trapping season should not be marked by bloodshed between the two tribes, or the trappers would have bad luck, and that their camps were often only a short distance apart. There would be visiting between camps and good-natured joking about the potency of their respective bundles. He further added that, through misfortune, the Mandan died off in such large numbers that they were obliged to relinquish most of their territory and establish a new territory which Hidatsa leaders had relinquished through simultaneous misfortunes. He had also heard the old men say that before abandoning the Cannonball region the Arikara, who then lived as far north as the Grand River to the south, had a similar treaty with the Sioux not to fight during the eagle-trapping season and at that time began to come into Mandan territory to make trouble. Since one was not permitted to carry his weapons to the pit,[4] a practice observed until trapping was abandoned a few years ago, the Mandan decided that it would be best to abandon their Cannonball River sites. New sites were established in Hidatsa trapping territory after the Mandan moved from the Heart River region to join the Hidatsa. Crows Heart had often visited the Crows and had heard them say they preferred to shoot the young birds, while still near their nesting places, to sitting in pits. There was also a period when the Snake Indians bothered the trappers, but he thought that it was not so long ago, as the Indians had horses by that time.[5]

A few leaders went to the east side of the Missouri River while occupying the Heart River region. Pits were dug as far east as Dog Den Butte and around Devils Lake. This was a limited territory since, in general, the country was too flat on the east side of the Missouri for successful trapping.

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Ownership of a site was vested in the leader who had either purchased the lodge and adjacent pits from a man of his own

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[4] This practice suggests that a truce between tribes was quite universal before the introduction of the horse.

[5] No doubt he referred to a recent eastward movement of Shoshonean-speaking groups after the appearance of the horse on the Northern Plains.

clan or who had occupied unclaimed territory, erected his own 796
lodge, and marked the outlines of pits. Inheritance of trapping 223
sites was through the clan, and one could not secure permanent 425
ownership of a trapping site owned by a man of a different clan. 614
The nearest clan relative took possession of the site upon the death of the owner if it had not been sold. One could pay for permission to use a particular site for a season from one of a different clan when the owner did not intend to make use of it himself, but he was obliged to use the pits already dug and could not prepare new ones. In other words, a man could rent a site [427]
from an owner of a different clan, but he could not buy. When a site had been abandoned so long that its owner was not known, another could claim the site. Evidently little trouble was experienced over claims to sites, since a violator would have been
severely criticized. There was, in addition, a religious taboo, [784]
since both the eagles and the bears belonging to the ritual occupied major bundle status in each tribe, and a trespasser could never have attained a position of prominence in either tribe.

The ritualistic differences between the Mandan and Hidatsa 796
were no greater than those between separate bundle lines within
the same village. Wolf Chief's narrative (to be quoted later) illustrates 171
the extent to which one tribe borrowed from the other 778
in purchasing an eagle-trapping bundle. His father, Small 223
Ankles, purchased his rights from Big Cloud, who advised him to receive his instructions from Arrowhead Earrings, a Mandan, who was better informed. A study of individual bundle lines reveals that borrowing back and forth has been going on regularly since the smallpox epidemic of 1837, and from traditional information from informants this also applied to all their neighboring tribes as well. In native theory the particular ritual practiced at any time depended on these three factors: (1) the instructions received when the bundle was transferred; (2) elements of other eagle-trapping bundle rituals purchased; and (3) vision instructions.

A bundle-owner could sell his rights four times, and it was 796
only when the fourth sale was made that the original bundle was 778
transferred, new bundles being made up for the first three sales. 223
The amount of instruction received depended on the desires of

796 778 223 the purchaser. He could receive instructions and rights in a limited number of fundamental rites to trap eagles without going into the entire lore belonging to the ceremony. He could then lead trapping expeditions to established trapping grounds, open the lodge, receive the birds brought in by the trappers, and send the spirits away. He could not, however, dig new pits, make offerings to the holy women, or perform the many other simple rites associated with these expeditions. He would not attract the best trappers on his expeditions, as informants stated that successful trappers preferred to go out with leaders who had special rites for all situations likely to arise.

796 778 424 Some bundle-owners took particular interest in the mythology and rites belonging to eagle-trapping to the extent that supplementary purchases were made. In time, these leaders became authorities on eagle-trapping and received popular recognition comparable to specialists in any other pursuit such as warfare or hunting. Whenever such an owner discovered that another had a sacred song or simple rite used in connection with eagle-trapping, a purchase could be made, regardless of the clan of the seller. In this manner new elements modified or supplemented the original bundle rites.

The rites were further modified by vision instructions. When Bear on the Flat received his bundle from his father, Belly Up, he was instructed not to permit anyone to touch the snake poles. Subsequently, Bear on the Flat received a vision from the snakes in which he was advised to permit his trappers to wipe their hands on the poles as the snakes' portion of the meal.

796 773 223 Every major ceremony, whether Mandan or Hidatsa, had a mythological origin, and, in this respect, eagle-trapping ceremonies occupied major bundle status. In theory, eagle-trapping was first employed by two classes of small bears, the small black bears that had their pits on the east side of the Missouri River and the small brown bears that trapped on the west bank. There were seven mythological eagle-trapping camps at which these small bears were accustomed to meet in autumn to catch the young black-tipped eagles (see Fig. 29).

The brown-bear camps were at: (1) Thunder Butte; (2) Knife River, near the present town of Golden Valley; and (3) Heart River Ravine, near the town of New Salem. The black-bear

camps were at: (1) One Cottonwood Camp, at the mouth of the 796
Yellowstone; (2) First Trapping Camp, the high ridge south of 773
Sanish; (3) Buckbrush Trapping Camp, south of Shell Creek; 223
and (4) High Butte Trapping Camp, southeast of Like-a-Fishhook Village.

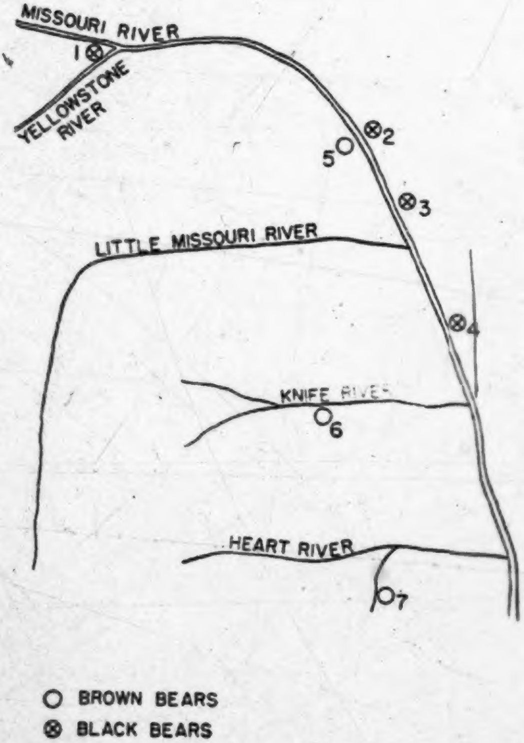
MISSOURI RIVER
1
YELLOWSTONE RIVER
2
5
3
LITTLE MISSOURI RIVER
4
KNIFE RIVER
6
HEART RIVER
7
O BROWN BEARS
⊗ BLACK BEARS

FIG. 29.—Mythological trapping camps of the Bears. *1*, One Cottonwood Camp; *2*, First Trapping Camp; *3*, Buckbrush Trapping Camp; *4*, High Butte Trapping Camp; *5*, Thunder Butte Trapping Camp; *6*, Sand Lodge Camp; *7*, Heart River Ravine Camp.

According to native belief, the small bears had trapped for 796
a long time before the Indians received instruction in trapping. 773
The theory of acquiring this supernatural knowledge conforms
to the tribal pattern by which the world of the sacred is brought 776
to the secular world through the medium of a hero. In this case, the hero was Black Wolf, who had been separated from a hunting party and was saved from starvation by a party of small black bears, then engaged in trapping eagles to the north of the

● 796 villages on the east bank of the Missouri River. The method of
acquiring this sacred lore is characteristic of most Mandan-
773 Hidatsa bundles, but the particular spirits participating and the
776 contributions made by each is characteristic solely of eagle-
trapping. The chief spirit contributors were Old Black Bear, Coyote, Snake, Buffalo, Young Eagle, and Little Black Bear.

796 Old Black Bear taught Black Wolf these songs: (1) song to the
lodge (sung when building the lodge); (2) song to the sweat
773 lodge (sung when the sweat lodge was being built and when it
776 was being used); (3) song to the bait; (4) song to the pit;
533 (5) song to the snare; (6) song to the goose; (7) song to the
swan; (8) song to the little bear; and (9) song to the bear.

Coyote taught the following song:

My old one in autumn
here I go (come to) Your power is strong.

The snakes contributed a song to be used when making offerings to the snake poles, since they belonged in the ceremony because Grandson once visited the bears while the ceremony was in progress.[6]

Buffalo[7] asked to come along and he contributed this song:

Lodge we have come lodge they have come

The *ma-si* eagle taught this song:

Earth above I am walking
Earth on I am walking

773 Several versions of the origin of eagle-trapping were recorded
during this study, and they were all essentially alike. Ben Ben-
539 son, who had secured his rights from Iron Eyes, his father, supplied the following origin myth of eagle-trapping.

EAGLE-TRAPPING MYTH (BLACK WOLF)
RELATED BY BEN BENSON[8]

A long time ago the Mandan did not know how to catch eagles or how to do many of the things they learned to do in later years. In one of the villages

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[6] Cf. my manuscript on "Hidatsa Social and Ceremonial Life" (Department of Anthropology, University of Chicago), for myth of Grandson visiting the Snakes, which slept with their heads on two poles and on opposite sides of the fire in Red Butte; cf. also above for the myth of Grandson, son of the Moon, in chap. vi, on "The Corn Ceremonies."

[7] A bundle containing a buffalo bull skull occupied major bundle status.

[8] For other relations of this myth by Ben Benson see Frances Densmore, *Mandan and Hidatsa Music* (Bureau of American Ethnology, Bull. 80 [1923]), pp. 64-69, and Martha

223 346 778 in line with the entrance of the ceremonial lodge to the east. Before the introduction of horses, women lived in pole lodges, but these lodges were replaced with hide tepees as soon as possession of horses became general.

223 796 When returning to a site that had been used the former year, the two poles representing the snakes were brought from their place on the west side of the lodge and placed at the door; otherwise new ones were cut and brought to the lodge. Before the leader carried in the sacred bundle, he would sing the Song to the Lodge, with the trappers seated around him. After this he addressed the bundle, announced that trapping was about to commence, and asked for good luck from the Bears, the Buffalo, and the Snare. He then entered the lodge, invited the Buffalo and the trappers to come in, and placed the Buffalo skull and bundle at the head of the lodge.

When all were inside, the leader sang the Song of the Snakes and called for the two snake poles, which were brought in and placed one on the left side and the other on the right side of the lodge with the large ends representing the heads pointed toward the head of the lodge and the altar. The leader then produced a short sharp stick, usually decorated with porcupine quills, and marked off the limits of the fireplace, after which a rectangular pit was excavated. The rectangular shape of the fireplace was symbolic of the eagle-trapping pit, while the fire was addressed as "Grandfather," meaning that "it goes back in time to the beginning of things." The two ash poles were then placed on opposite sides of the fireplace. The pole on the left side represented the male snake and the one on the right side represented the female.[27] According to Mandan-Hidatsa tradition, Two Men[28] once came along and stopped with a party trapping eagles and informed the leader that the eagles ate snakes while the snakes preferred to eat eagle down. In that way snake poles were used in the ceremonial lodge for the men to place their heads on while sleeping.

The leader placed a juneberry branch tied up with white sage, representing the moon and also identified with the black-tipped eagle, and a fiber snare over the entrance. The sun, also identified with the speckled eagle, was represented by a chokecherry branch and a fiber snare tied over the front standard above the altar. 223 796

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[27] The arrangement of these two poles was symbolic of the lodge in Red Butte, visited by Grandson, where the snakes slept with their heads on poles at opposite sides of the fire.

[28] Lodge Boy and Spring Boy of Hidatsa mythology.

Then followed the assignment of places for the duration of the trapping season and the selection of officers. Until the assignment of places was made, the leader gave no indication of the selections he contemplated making. The leader's place was at the head of the lodge on the right side. For the place next to him he would select an assistant, whenever possible one who also had eagle-trapping rights. At the end of the row next to the door he would place the waiter. For the left side opposite the leader he would select the "Chief of the Hunters" or "Crack Shot." Next he would select an assistant to the Chief of the Hunters. In mythological times these last two positions were occupied by a single officer, Bear Cub, until Two Men stole his earthen pot. When they found that they could not escape from the Cub, they agreed to do the hunting for the bears, as they were arrows in spirit. When the party was quite large, a second waiter was selected to sit at the end of the line.

The assignment of "bird sticks" varied with different leaders. Bear on the Flat used twelve bird sticks cut from chokecherry branches, to which he tied pieces of calico. These sticks were stuck into the ground in a row in front of the buffalo skull. They represented the twelve tail feathers of the eagle and also the birds that belong in the eagle family according to native belief. Iron Eyes and Ben Benson placed one bird stick on the altar for each member of the party. Each stick was decorated with a piece of flint,[29] a strip of rabbit skin, and some white sage. Old Bear, a Mandan, placed four bird sticks at the altar for each trapper, representing four types of eagles—the bald-headed, speckled, four stripes (on tail feathers), and calumet (white tail feathers with black tips) varieties. Small Ankles gave each of his trappers two bird sticks decorated with calico. One was offered to the calumet and the other to all the other eagles.

After the lodge was entered, assignment of pits was in order. When returning to habitual trapping grounds, it was rarely necessary to dig new pits. The right to dig new pits was by a sepa- 223 425 423

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[29] See chap. ix for origin of flint knives.

2: Bowers E-5 (1930-1931)1950 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

223 425 423 rate purchase, and all leaders did not possess this. Purchasers received a short ash digging stick for laying out the corners of the pit and the right to sing the Song to the Pit. Lacking this right, it was necessary for a leader to select an established camp of a clan brother or a site which he had formerly purchased or borrowed, as he could not lay claim to a new site without the right to dig new pits. It was customary for a leader to return to the same site year after year, except that he could not lead eagle-trapping expeditions and put out a fish trap the same year.

When new pits were to be dug, the trapper made his own selection of the site and then called for the leader to mark the corners, which was done with the small ash stick while singing the Song to the Pit at each of the corners. He received payment for this service.

223 In order to avoid disputes when selecting pits, the leader would name two men to select their pits until each trapper had a pit. It was believed that the birds would not come down if disputes occurred. The first day in camp was usually spent in preparing the trapping lodge and assigning the pits. In the evening when the lodge was completed and the altar had been set up, the leader went out and called the birds, told them that the lodge was ready, informed the trappers of the rules, and sang the trapping songs.

•796 223 When the writer was on one of these trapping expeditions in 1932, Bear on the Flat gave us the following instructions in this order. Mark Mato served as interpreter. The main points stressed by Bear on the Flat were of necessity recorded in brief outline.

BEAR ON THE FLAT'S INSTRUCTIONS FOR EAGLE-TRAPPING

When the four-post eagle-trapping lodges are put up, the eagle-trapping owner should come out to that site each fall. When a person comes to a region for one season and knows that he will not return to the same site next season, he puts up the simple tepee-shaped lodge without the four central posts.

When lodges were used formerly, twelve to twenty trappers went out; the lodges were approximately twenty-five feet in diameter, and the snake poles were relatively larger. No one was allowed to touch the snake poles. If someone did, Old Black Bear punched him severely with one of the bird poles used as a poker for the fire. Children were pinched severely by anyone near at hand.

It is customary to wipe the hands on the snake poles after eating, as the snakes' share of the meal. Men sleep at night with their heads on the snake poles. Now, Bear on the Flat has asked the snakes to let them touch the poles, and the snakes came in a dream and gave him permission.

In mythological times Black Bear was alive and sat at the left side of the entrance, but in later years they put a bear skull and hide down. Now, they merely imagine that he is there, and in place of him put a skin on the altar.

The sun was represented on the back standard or crosspiece by a hoop of twisted wheat grass and a chokecherry twig to hang it on. The cherry represents the speckled eagle. At the front on a crosspiece was a twisted grass hoop on a juneberry twig, the hoop representing the moon and the twig the black-tipped eagle.

When an eagle is caught, it is to be brought in on the left side of the door. Short gray sage will be used to smoke the bird. Then the bird is thrown toward the buffalo skull, whether the bird is dead or alive.

When the first eagle is caught, it is put next to Post 1,[30] and a ball of parched corn is given to the bird and its blessing asked. Afterward each member of the party partakes of the corn.

Koicita is the name of the head man or Old Male Black Bear. If the party is large, he does not trap but keeps the lodge fire burning. Then he is not expected to go into the pits. In case the hunters are out after game because of adverse winds and the winds change to the west, he can go into any of their pits. Crows Heart is the Map'si or Chief of the Hunters and gets his orders from the Koicita. He should stay at Post 2[31] and receive eagles when brought in; also he should supply the camp with meat.

Evenings the party is expected to go into the sweat lodge, and each has his own place there. When in the sweat lodge, anyone can put in the rocks, but the same order of naming the rocks is carried out; when putting in the first rock, he says, "This is the mother of birds." He says for the second stone, "This is the child of the mother of birds." For the third he says, "This is the oldest bird." For the fourth he says, "This is the genuine speckled eagle." The rest of the stones are thrown in without ceremony.

It is believed that when the birds are ready to come southeast, they send a scout ahead to see if there is a lodge. If there is one, it peeps into the lodge. If it sees the offering on the twelve bird poles, it goes back to the land of the birds and tells what it saw. Then the birds know that the people of that lodge are showing respect for them, while the people know that all the sky-gods will be gathering around that lodge. That is the reason only those who know the proper ceremonies to the gods gathering there can be at the head of eagle-trapping.

During the mythological period, Buffalo said to Black Bear, "I am always lucky. Place me at the head of the lodge, and you will be the owner of some fine eagle down." Since that time, whenever a bird is caught, some of its down is given to the Black Bear hide near the buffalo skull.

A buffalo-bull horn is used to throw water on the rocks of the sweat lodge. Only those who buy the rights can make a sweat. Bear on the Flat bought his rights from his father. The bird poles are used to poke the fire as well as for pulling coals from the fire for the pipe. The gods are like humans; some are jealous, while others are good to the people and work for their welfare.

A rock is put into the trapping pit. If you get sleepy, put it under your

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[30] The post next to which the leader sits (see plan of lodge, Fig. 26).

[31] Opposite the leader.

796 head. If you drowse, you will roll off of it, and in that way the rock won't let you go to sleep.

223 When earth is taken from the four corners of the pit, a prayer is spoken assuring you that everything harmful to the human body or spirit has been removed. Persons going into pits can't scratch themselves or the birds will have poor feathers. They will be old birds and covered with insects.

796 223 773 When Black Bear was on the earth, he ate birds and everything else he could catch. One day he was in the pits when he heard a thundering noise. This noise recurred for three days. On the fourth day a large rock fell on him. While he was unconscious, Buffalo packed him off to the north where the old bears lived. Father of Black Bear was there after the boy was taken north. Buffalo was at the head of the lodge alive. The father of the Black Bear set fire to the lodge. As Buffalo was coming out, Old Black Bear caught Buffalo long enough to singe him from the chest down; that is why the hair is long on the buffalo's back but short on the chest; that is also why the buffalo skull is placed at the head of the lodge, for he is lucky and will bring good luck.

Crows Heart represents the Black Bear Cub who once packed an earthenware vessel on his back and wandered aimlessly about in the neighborhood of the Heart River. There he was met by two Mandans, called the Two Men, on the high ridge six miles south of Bismarck and nearly opposite the Huff site. One of the Two Men was foolish; the other was wise. The foolish one asked of Black Bear Cub, "What do you eat? You carry that pot on your back for nothing."

Cub said, "I have plenty of food, and I can cook my meal any time I want to."

Saying that, he spit on his left arm and sang a sacred song. They heard a sound in the skies, the noise made by an eagle coming down to perch on Cub's uplifted arm. When it lit, Cub strangled it with the hemp rope which he put over the bird's head. Then he began to pull out the feathers. After that he packed the meat into the kettle. Although the kettle was small, he was able to pack it all in. When the meat was ready, he placed four bunches of sage in the form of a square around the pot, singing this song:

Water flow into the kettle.
Fire burn round the kettle.
Kettle boil.

Everything took place simultaneously with the uttering of the words. The fourth song said:

This kettle is sacred.

And his meal was cooked. In this manner he got a meal from little effort.

The Two Men thought they should live leisurely also, so they stole the kettle and ran away to hide in all the prominent hills with names. Every time they went into one of the hills, Cub would come with his rope and pull the hill down. Then the occupants of the hill would drive the Two Men out. So they went from hill to hill, the Killdeer Mountains, Thunder Buttes [south of Sanish], Eagle Buttes, Birds Bill Butte, and then to Dog Den Butte where the hills now lean. Dog Den Butte was the home of many gods and was considered very holy. The Two Men fortified themselves there. Cub came with his rope, which he threw around the hill, and pulled on the hill.

The Two Men, having no other place to go, gave themselves up. Cub was going to kill them, but they said they would be his servants and do his hunt-

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ing. On the eagle-trapping expeditions these two men supplied the meat for the camp. This party being small, only Crows Heart has that office. He should sleep opposite the Old Black Bear. 223 773

You should be tortured and cry for the birds to have good luck.

KINDS OF BIRDS

1. Bald-headed Eagle. White head and white tail. Parent to speckled eagle. 223 825
2. Speckled Eagle.
3. Spotted-barred tail. Body is black.
4. White tail with black tip. Known as the calumet eagle.
5. "Half of each feather good, half bad."
6. "Black but has white tails"; head is white; is a hawk.
7. I'pamasina.
8. Chicken hawk. Tails barred black and light brown.
9. Goose.
10. One of the smaller geese.

The twelve sticks on the altar represent the twelve tail feathers but also represent the ten birds listed above. 223

When in the pit one must not smoke. When you get in, even up the grass and while you are away from the pit hide the poles put on top to keep grass from blowing.

When tying the bait, be sure to put it close enough so that you can reach the bird. You will get a wooden pin from the leader to stick into the wall for the snare to hang onto. When catching an eagle, grab one foot first; then the bird will pull away from the pit; get a hold of the other foot and hold both feet with one hand; then fold its wings over and choke it with the snare.

The second day in camp was usually spent digging new pits or cleaning out those previously used. The walls of old pits were often broken in. Care was taken to remove all the earth in baskets or robes to a place where the birds would not see it or the people walk on it.[32] The pits should be deep enough for the trapper to sit upright in but not quite long enough to stretch out full length in. Most trappers had their pits on the tops of hills near the northwest edge, but it was believed that the best pits were those on the northwest slope, about three rods from the top of the hill, so situated that there was an open view for many miles westward. Birds approaching from that direction while still flying high in the air could see the bait.

In alighting, they would fly beyond the summit of the hill and turn back to light, facing into the west wind. It was difficult to find a good natural location. Should the pit be too near the rim, the birds lit too far back and were likely to sense danger while walking up to the bait. On the other hand, pits located too far

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[32] This was done because the pit was sacred.

223 or a foxskin. When trapping in the lake region east of the Missouri either a stuffed duck or goose was used. When a suitable bait was difficult to secure, the head and neck of an antelope were used. Usually the bait was secured while the party was traveling to the trapping grounds. When a stuffed skin was used, a piece of raw meat was tied to it. Some picketed a live eagle near the pit when one was available, if luck was unusually bad. There was a song to the bait which the leader used when "tying the bait," as well as a prescribed method of carrying it to and from the pit.

796 223 785 [787] Torture of the trappers, by one of several techniques, occurred regularly, and there was a prescribed ritual for the person offering himself. It was believed that someone should "suffer for the birds" if the expedition were to be successful. The Mandan felt, after uniting with the Hidatsa at Like-a-Fishhook Village, that visions were difficult to secure in the village ceremonies because there were too many ill-informed people, particularly women, who violated the customs. Crows Heart frequently stated that torture in the Okipa ceremony was less frequently practiced and that he preferred to seek a vision away from the village. Usually a young man would decide beforehand to seek a vision while away from the village trapping eagles, the type of torture being recommended by an older clan brother. The Chief of the Hunter's duty was to pierce the flesh and insert the thongs, except that, when he stood in a joking relationship with the vision-seeker, he could not serve, and another was selected, usually his assistant. Some trappers pulled buffalo skulls through camp by means of thongs fastened through the skin of the back. Crows Heart once hung over a cliff by means of thongs through the skin of the chest. Bears Arm hung from a tree. Sometimes the vision-seeker had no preference, and the leader suggested that he bring wood into camp. In such instances, wood was tied up into twelve bundles,[34] to which lariats were fastened, and dragged to camp by means of thongs through the flesh to which the lariats were tied. All the wood was dragged into camp without help from others, the sufferer even removing his moccasins to make the pain more severe. Tortur-

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[34] Each bundle represented one of the eagle's tail feathers.

ing of trappers was performed the evening that the pits were 796
completed. 223

Ordinarily when a party was composed of advanced middle- 785
aged men, none were tortured, except on occasions when the birds would not stop, or when the winds continued from the wrong direction, there would be fasters on the hills crying during the night. If bad luck continued, then some would offer their bodies for torture and even cut off a piece of finger as an offering to the birds. In historic times there seems to have been somewhat more emphasis of the torture feature when eagle-trapping by the Mandan than the Hidatsa. Since we know from historic accounts[35] that the torture feature was highly developed with the Mandan, it appears that there occurred a transfer from village to nonvillage rites, the latter taking place when on hunting, eagle-trapping, and war expeditions.

Someone was selected, generally one of the waiters, to go out 223
before daylight to determine the direction of the wind. The wind
must be from a westerly direction, or it was believed that the [825]
birds were not traveling. Crows Heart explained that the calumet eagles nested in the Rocky Mountains and that the pits were located along the migration route to their wintering grounds to the southeast.[36] A piece of soft hide tied to the top of a pole placed on a high hill within view of the camp was employed to indicate the direction of the wind. If favorable winds were blowing, the leader was notified. He ordered all the trappers to prepare for trapping. None was allowed to eat before going out to the pits, as trapping was considered a form of ceremonial "suffering for the birds." Each trapper left shortly after daybreak for his pit, carrying his bait, a ceremonial fiber snare painted red with a piece of Black Medicine attached to it, and several leather snares. The bait was tied to two stakes driven into the ground four inches from the west edge of the pit. A shallow

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[35] See Maximilian, Prince of Wied, *Travels in the Interior of North America, 1832–1834*, in *Early Western Travels, 1748–1846*, ed. Reuben Gold Thwaites, XXIII (Cleveland, 1906), 331–33, 377–78; cf. George Catlin, *Letters and Notes on the Manners, Customs, and Condition of the North American Indians*, I (Philadelphia, 1857), 265–75.

[36] Benson explained that the southland was the meeting place in winter of many 825
creatures considered holy. Among these he included the thunderbirds, eagles, hawks,
ducks, geese, cranes, herons, as well as the spirits of the corn and other garden products. 773
This meeting place was an island where Old Woman Who Never Dies lived in her large earth lodge with four large snakes living in the water surrounding her island as her helpers.

223 ditch wide enough to permit the trapper to reach out his right hand was then dug to the bait. A short stick was kept in the pit to punch away hawks and magpies. The trapper sat down in the pit and fitted the cover into place. The fiber snare was hung on a peg pressed into the west wall, and the "sleep stone," a small stone about three inches in diameter, was set on the east wall.[37]

When eagles flying by saw the bait, they usually circled around the hill a few times before coming down to light a short distance from the bait and walk up to it. Rarely did birds light directly on the bait. As soon as the bird reached the bait, the trapper thrust out his right hand, seized the leg, and pulled the bird down toward the ground. Ben Benson, who owned full trapping rights, said that he always gave his trappers this instruction:

> When the eagle comes to the bait, it will be so close that you can see it through the grass covering over the pit. Use your right hand and catch the leg closest to you. Pull the bird down toward the ground, not toward you. Put out the left hand and get the other leg. Hold both legs with the left hand and put the right hand out and swing one wing over against the other. Hold both wings together at the tips, and the bird can't hurt you. Tie the feet together then. Eagles are strong and fierce. They can stick their claws through your hand, pick your face, or cut your face with their wings. Don't catch bald-headed eagles; they are fierce and will fight.

Live eagles, when used as decoys, were staked down at the southeast corner of the pit. Benson never allowed more to be kept alive than the number of trappers. Some leaders required the trappers to kill their birds as soon as they were caught. Decoys were carried to the pits while trapping; other times they were kept in the bird shelter on the west side of the ceremonial lodge. Whenever an eagle flew by the pit, the decoys whistled, attracting the other bird's attention to the bait and warning the man in the pit.

● 796 223 Ceremonial crying when approaching the lodge with an eagle was practiced by all leaders. If the bird caught was a young black-tipped bird, crying continued all the way to the door of the lodge. Crying stopped when about one hundred and fifty paces from the lodges if a spotted golden eagle, the parent of a black tip, was being brought to camp. For a white-headed eagle, crying stopped at a considerable distance from camp. The bird was taken in at the left side of the lodge. Women around camp went into their lodges and covered their heads while birds were being brought into camp.

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[37] When excavating an old pit for Crows Heart in 1932, we found a stone near the south wall, and a perforated clam shell used for paint was on a shelf dug in the east wall.

The leader did not have a trap but stayed around camp while the trappers were out in order to be ready to receive the birds as they were brought in by the men at sunset. When crying continued until the lodge was reached, the leader knew that a young calumet eagle had been caught. Coals were placed near the front right post, and sage was burned there as incense for the snare and other sacred objects.

A song was addressed to the snare, announcing to it that it had caught something. A second song[38] addressed to the people by Black Bear referred to the sacredness of the birds in the opinion of the people, a belief not shared by the bears. A third song referred to the coming feast when the bird was to be eaten.

The trapper announced the kind of bird, after which it was pushed violently through the left side of the doorway, moving the hide-door covering sufficiently to get the bird through. The twelve tail feathers which had been removed beforehand were tied together and placed on the bird's back as it was taken in the lodge, part way to the altar, and thrown violently at the snare on the altar. The leader produced a corn ball from which a small piece was broken and rubbed on the bird's beak saying, "Acira[39] feeds you." The ceremonial pipe was produced, and the bird's beak was touched with the pipe as an offering to the bird.

When the first eagle was brought in, Iron Eyes extracted five white down feathers from his bundle; two were offered to the snake poles, one to the sun snare, one to the moon snare, and one to the buffalo skull. The leader directed the successful trapper to carry his bird to the back of the lodge, as the lodge was too sacred even for so sacred a creature as an eagle.

The trappers returned to the ceremonial lodge at sunset carrying their baits on their back. As soon as a trapper came into the lodge, the waiter gave him food which had been brought

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[38] When the bears instructed Black Wolf in the art of eagle-trapping, they explained that the people considered the eagles sacred, but not so with the bears, who considered them their favorite food.

[39] Some bundles had a bear's foot, in which case the leader said, "Footbone feeds you."

•796 over from the women's camp. Afterward the trapper smoked.
Each trapper, after eating, discussed happenings at the pit, and,
223 from the information thus supplied, the leader offered suggestions for increasing the catch. When birds circled the bait but
would not come down, it was suggested that raw meat be used.
Sometimes the birds flew by without appearing to see the bait,
and decoys were recommended.

223 The leader did not have a pit for his own use but remained in camp. However, if the wind was from the wrong direction in the morning and the men were out hunting game, he could go into any of the pits should the wind change to the west.

223 Evenings were spent in storytelling. The leader would ac-
773 quaint the trappers with the myths associated with eagle-trapping. There were many of these myths, and a good leader would
538 be able to consume every evening for the usual four weeks in
camp without exhausting his stock. Each was related in great detail with endless repetitions. Some of the longer myths consumed four nights in telling; others were short and could be related in one night. All were expected to listen attentively while seated on a buffalo robe. Those who nodded were pinched with the bird stick. An example of the stories told is given in the Appendix.

223 The position of women in eagle-trapping ceremonies varied
among bundle-owners. (1) Most bundle-owners prohibited
562 women from entering the ceremonial lodge or looking inside.
(2) Several bundle-owners had special rites to which women
were invited when birds had been caught. (3) A few bundle-
[841] owners required a menstruating woman to come into the lodge
and breathe the smoke from sage burned at the four corners of
the fire pit.

223 Unless special rites relative to the women were purchased,
562 they were required to stay away from the ceremonial lodge and
841 its vicinity. The right to bring women into the lodge was a separate purchase not essential to trapping eagles. There were sepa-
171 rate songs and a myth, giving the right to call in a menstruating
woman, which could be purchased. It referred to the capture of
the leader of the eagles who, in return for having her life spared,
promised unusual success if her song was sung when a menstruating woman was brought into the lodge. The consensus of both

223 796 a brief ritual closed the eagle-trapping period. It was essentially the same for all bundle-owners. Ben Benson's ritual, which he received of Iron Eyes, was explained as follows.

BEN BENSON'S NARRATIVE OF CLOSING RITES

When ice began to form along the edges of small creeks, the men knew that it was time to stop trapping eagles. Usually three to eight weeks were spent trapping. The leader was in full charge of the expedition, and no one knew when he would order the trapping stopped. Early on the day trapping was to stop, the leader would kindle the fire and say, "Get up. There is a big flood coming." This meant that they must stop trapping, for when the flood comes there is no changing its course. Those who had never been out before did not know the meaning, but the old trappers knew that the time had come to return home.

After eating, the leader would say, "It is time now to kill all your live eagles. Kill them with Rope-in-Wood Snare. Carry all your eagles over the hill [he then designated the place] and put them in a row. Then you should make an offering of calico[43] to them."

By the time this had been done and the trappers had returned to camp, the leader had his eagle-trapping bundle closed and the women had their tepees down, ready to break camp.

One of the party, usually the man with the best war record, was sent out by the leader "to see if there are any enemies in the neighborhood." He went to the place where the dead eagles were lined up and returned in a hurry to report that there were a certain number of enemies just beyond the hill. [The number reported corresponded with the dead birds counted.] The trappers prepared for battle, painted their faces, dressed lightly, and put their hair up in a ball on top of their heads where it would not cover their eyes. Each trapper sang his personal sacred song and wore some article from his sacred bundle. At a signal from the leader, all charged the "enemies," shooting and calling as they ran. Each seized a bird and cut off the wings and five body feathers, running back to camp as quickly as possible.

The party moved away from camp immediately and stopped to make camp again after traveling a mile or more. The young men built a sweat lodge under the leader's direction, while the women prepared food. The sweat-lodge entrance was to the south. The trappers placed the wing and tail feathers they had secured on the west side of the fireplace, while the leader stood at the entrance to the sweat lodge with his eagle-trapping bundle on one side and a bundle of sage on the other.

223 796 533 The leader began by chanting four wordless songs and then, half-singing, half-talking, he addressed the eagles in these words:

> Eagles, go; leave us; go, everyone of you;
> Eagles, go; leave us; go, everyone of you;
> Go; walk; go in the right direction;
> Go; walk; go in the right direction;
> Go to Birds Bill Butte;[44] there you will find antelope meat;
> Go to Birds Bill Butte; there you will find antelope meat.

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[43] In early times a strip of soft tanned elkhide was used.

[44] Birds Bill Butte, better known today as Eagle Nose Butte, is a high promontory south of Mandan, North Dakota.

Eagles, go; leave us; go, everyone of you; 223
Eagles, go; leave us; go, everyone of you; 796
Go; walk; go in the right direction;
Go; walk; go in the right direction; 533
Go across the divide;[45] there you will find blacktail deer meat;
Go across the divide; there you will find blacktail deer meat.

Eagles, go; leave us; go, everyone of you;
Eagles, go; leave us; go, everyone of you;
Go; walk; go in the right direction;
Go; walk; go in the right direction;
Go to Grape River;[46] there you will find elk meat;
Go to Grape River; there you will find elk meat.

Eagles, go; leave us; go, everyone of you;
Eagles, go; leave us; go, everyone of you;
Go; walk; go in the right direction;
Go; walk; go in the right direction;
Go to the Big Bend;[47] there you will find buffalo meat;
Go to the Big Bend; there you will find buffalo meat.
Now you are home.[48]

When this song was ended, the spirits of the eagles left to join their people in the meeting place of the spirits near a large body of water. Only the leaders could send the spirits away. Men without eagle-trapping rights were afraid to catch eagles for fear that the spirits, being unsent, might bring bad luck to the trappers. All who caught eagles gave the leader pay in feathers, calicoes, robes, or knives for singing these songs and sending the birds' spirits away.

Then the leader sang the cleansing song, rubbing all the feathers with the sage. He rubbed each person in the party to cleanse him and bring him back to a human being again. While trapping, the men were impersonating the small bears. My father gave each trapper a new name connected with the bears for the duration of trapping. Mandan generally had this change of names. If a trapper stumbled when out trapping, he would report it and get another name, otherwise he would have bad luck. Each man paid the leader for his name, but it was relinquished when the cleansing ceremony ended.

The leader and as many as wished went into the sweat lodge, where the trappers hung the feathers on the sides in imitation of the bear's lodge far to the north. The sweat-lodge rites completed the ceremonies, after which the families united again either to return home at once or to hunt along the way according to their inclinations. 223 796

Benson claimed to be the fourteenth owner of the bundle which he used. In order of succession from Black Wolf, the owners were reported as follows: (1) Black Wolf; (2) Bull Leg; 223 778

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[45] The Mandan called that section of the country between the Cannonball and Grand rivers "The Divide." The blacktail deer meat was believed to be on a high hill at the mouth of the Grand River and on the north bank.

[46] The Little Bend of the Missouri River is at the mouth of the Cheyenne River, called by the Mandan Grape River.

[47] The Big Bend of the Missouri is below Pierre, South Dakota.

[48] The Mandan believed that the Missouri River entered the ocean not far below the Big Bend. This was believed to be the winter home of migratory waterfowl, corn, and the large birds of the eagle family (see chap. ix). [823]

Chapter VIII

CATFISH-TRAPPING CEREMONY

THIS ceremony was associated with the eagle-trapping 226
bundle, and both possessed a common mythological origin 796
from Black Wolf. There was no direct reference to the fish trap
in the Black Wolf myth, but in theory the sacred snare could 773
catch anything. Crows Heart explained that even a buffalo corral 789
was in reality a large snare, so a man owning a sacred snare was selected to stand on a high hill and by means of motions, as of snaring the buffaloes, pulled the animals by its magical powers into the corral.[1] War leaders took their sacred snares along when looking for enemies for supernatural aid in ensnaring and destroying their foes.

Purchase of catfish- and eagle-trapping rites could be made 223
simultaneously, or the fish-trapping rights could be bought at 226
a later date. Some men bought rights in only one of the ceremonies. A seller possessing rights in both ceremonies could sell 424
each ceremony four times. Associated closely with these two ceremonies were the sweat lodge and the snare rites for doctoring and officiating at the buffalo and antelope pounds.

Although the Missouri River carries considerable sediment, 226
catfish are very abundant. The presence of catfish bones in 262
ancient Mandan and Hidatsa villages indicates that considerable 172
use was made of these fish as food.

When a fish trap was in use, the black-bear hide was kept in 226
the owner's lodge, laid out on calicoes on a four-post standard 796
with its head pointing toward the fireplace. Food was offered to 778
the bundle each day while the fish trap was being used.

Ben Benson remembered these Mandan who had catfish- 424
trapping rights about 1880:

1. Black Tongue (Big Turtle). He was also custodian of the Okipa turtle drums, Hoita in the Okipa, owner of an Eagle-trapping bundle, and a singer in the Corn ceremonies.

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[1] Refer to my manuscript, "Hidatsa Social and Ceremonial Organization," for an account of the ceremonies associated with the buffalo corral.

226 2. Hits on Back. Owner of an Eagle-trapping bundle, a Holy Woman Robe bundle, and a Bird bundle of Sikaraxa.

•796 3. Iron Eyes. Owner of an Eagle-trapping bundle, a Wolf ceremony bundle, and custodian of an Okipa turtle drum.

424 4. Old (Black) Bear. Owner of an Eagle-trapping bundle.

778 5. Little Shield. Owner of an Eagle-trapping bundle, and a Big Bird (Thunderbird) bundle.

6. Big Walker. Owner of an Eagle-trapping bundle.

It will be noted that each of these men also had eagle-trapping rights. In addition to these six bundle-owners, there were a number of men possessing fish-trap rights without securing a bundle. Such rights were acquired by payment of goods to a bundle-owner, who authorized the construction of a trap with instruction that the purchaser address his prayers to the seller's bundle. The following account by Crows Heart illustrates purchase by this method. His maternal grandfather had owned fish-trapping rites which had not been passed on. To receive instruction, his mother's sister directed him to the nearest relative of the opposite moiety.

CROWS HEART'S NARRATIVE OF FISH-TRAPPING

226 424 425 When I was a young man, I often fished with a line and metal hooks bought at the trading post. I never had very good luck catching fish that way. I only caught small catfish, bullheads, and white shiners which were full of bones. I often went down to the river in the fall when the water was low and helped the old men bail the fish out. They were catching the fish at night. Their fish were large ones, mostly catfish. Many of the very old people, especially the old women whose husbands were dead, came to the traps, and the men would give them fish. This made the old women very happy, and they would sing songs of praise to the old men. When I saw how happy it made them, I decided to trap fish when I grew up and make the old people happy.

One day I asked my "mother" how I could get the right to make a fish trap, and she said, "Go to Old Black Bear;[2] he is the man you must see."

When she said that, I asked, "Must I pay him?"

She replied, "You will have to pay him a horse and some blankets."

When I was nearly thirty years old, I invited Old Black Bear to my earth lodge. My wife prepared a feast of meat, bread, and coffee. I spread out a new robe on the floor, and he sat down on it. I had an overcoat I had paid $30.00 for; I put that over his shoulders. I also gave him a good gun, a fair horse, a redstone pipe, a good butcher knife, and three or four pieces of calico. Then he said, "What's up? What's all this for?"

I replied, "I want you to do me a favor. I want you to give me the right to make a fish trap."

He said, "I will give you the right to make and set out a fish trap. There's not much time today. I will teach you how to make the trap. If you think it

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[2] Crows Heart's father's moiety.

Chapter IX

BIG BIRD CEREMONY

796 173 THE birds belonging to this ceremony were classed in four groups: (1) hawks, ravens, and crows; (2) young calumet eagles; (3) old calumet eagles; and (4) bald eagles. According to the myth, the thunderbird was considered a relative of these birds, while in other myths the thunderbird was referred to as any one of the four groups of birds listed above.

796 821 The various rites were frequently referred to as the Thunderbird ceremony. However, birds other than those included in these rites, as well as the Sun and Moon and the snakes, were believed to possess the supernatural power of producing thunder and lightning.

796 778 773 There were two principal bundles appertaining to the ceremony. The Black Medicine bundle owned by Red Buffalo Cow (Prairie Chicken clan) was traditionally founded by Black Medicine, while the Sweet Medicine bundle was believed to have been founded by Grows in Lee Places, his twin brother. The latter bundle was last owned by Sand (Speckled Eagle clan). These two bundles came from Nuptadi Village. A second Black Medicine bundle owned by Little Shield (Prairie Chicken clan) came from Fort Clark Village. [614] The linked character of the Prairie Chicken and Speckled Eagle clans was expressed by the inheritance through the clan of two closely related bundles from two "brothers" of different clans.

The two bundles had a common mythological origin based on the exploits of two brothers. The myth was supplied by Ben Benson, while much of the data on rites relating to the bundle were secured from White Calf.

773 BIG BIRD CEREMONY MYTH RELATED BY BEN BENSON[1]

539 This account goes back to the time when the villages were near the mouth of Heart River. Chief Bird was the head man of one of the villages. His sons

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[1] For another relation of this myth by the same informant see Martha Warren Beckwith, *Mandan-Hidatsa Myths and Ceremonies* ("Memoirs of the American Folk-Lore Society," XXXII [1938]), pp. 53–62.

Chapter X

THE SMALL HAWK CEREMONY

796 778 ONLY the principal bundle belonging to this ceremony[1] remained in existence following the smallpox epidemic of 1837, although Scattercorn had heard that there had been a number of them formerly. The surviving bundle came from Mitutanka. The rites occupied a high place in the tribe's ceremonial life, and the small hawk, belonging to the bundle, was impersonated by one of the performers in the Okipa ceremony. The other bundle lines, of which there were said to have been several, were broken by the death of all eligible inheritors.

The single surviving bundle was owned by Berdache and her sister of the Tamisik clan and their husband of the WaxikEna clan. The latter two died after their daughters Calf Woman and Stands Yellow had married Hits on Back who had come to his wives' lodge to live. Hits on Back of the WaxikEna clan and his two wives bought the bundle from Berdache.[2] The bundle consisted of a sacred buffalo robe which traditionally came from Toad Earrings, mother of Buffalo Woman, a hide rattle representing Buffalo Woman, a gourd rattle representing Corn Silk, sage and magpie tail feathers representing membership in the Holy Woman Society, a stuffed hawk with blue shoulders and yellow spotted breast representing Split Wing Feathers and Looks Down To Hunt, a small ash digging stick, a wooden pipe, and a buffalo skull.

778 421 425 The bundle could be divided into two sections. One section consisted of the hawk, sage, hide rattle, pipe, and a buffalo skull and was transferable to a man of the WaxikEna clan, while the other section, the sacred robe, gourd rattle, sage, magpie and tail feathers, could be bought by the wife. Subdivided bundles seem to have soon lost their hereditary character. Each section

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[1] The bundle is known as the Sikaraxa bundle, referring to the small hawk or kite mentioned in the sacred myth.

[2] This purchase illustrates the character of bundle purchase through the female line.

could be sold four times. The usual transfer was to sisters married 778
to one man, in which instances the women acquired rights 421
in the sacred robe and other paraphernalia of that section, and
the husband took over the balance of the bundle. Such purchases 425
were made only after several years of married life, as it
was considered a sign of bad luck for common bundle-owners to [777]
quarrel. Crows Heart explained that having a common interest in a bundle was a powerful factor in making marriages permanent. Sale was not made until the parent-in-law taboo had been removed.

The prominence of these bundles is demonstrated by their representation in the Okipa ceremony. During the early summer all men owning primary and secondary rights in a Small Hawk ceremony met in one of their earth lodges to select two young men to represent their bundles in that summer's Okipa ceremony. Either young men of this group or men who were eligible to inherit a bundle were selected to dance in the ceremony and to receive goods offered to Small Hawk bundle-owners.

Women owning rights in the bundle were entitled to dress in [292]
the sacred robe, place sage and magpie tail feathers in the hair, and carry the ash digging stick at the close of the Okipa ceremony, when separate offerings were made to them by the Okipa Maker and his fellow-fasters and on other occasions when a feast was made to the bundle as a Buffalo-calling ceremony.

The rites are based on the exploits of Corn Silk, who visited 796
the small hawk at his lodge on the eastern horizon where he 773
lived with his mother. This small hawk, being a good hunter, taught the Buffalo-calling rites. Because he could produce thunder, he also introduced a rain-calling rite. His son, Looks Down To Hunt, inherited all his father's powers.

The holy robe and its rites have as their mythological origin 778
Looks Down To Hunt's experiences on the northern horizon 773
where he encountered his wife's mother who lived in a large earth lodge. After avoiding many hazards which she had set up to protect her people, the buffaloes, she was obliged to free these animals. The Mandan had many sacred robes, but each had its separate origin myth.

The myth throws light on the native theories of the universe. 773
In one place Looks Down To Hunt asked the spider for his body 772

773 in order that he could retreat to the lowest level in the universe.
772 It was believed that the earth comprised four horizontal levels
and that the surface of the earth was the top level. The sky was
likewise made up of four semicircular hemispheres shaped like
an earth-lodge roof and supported by four posts. This belief was
associated with rites performed by a female robe-owner when-
ever a new lodge was erected or an old one repaired.

•796 There was no spring or autumn bird feast, as in the case of the
778 Big Bird bundles. When the bundle-owners were paid to per-
form the Buffalo-calling ceremony, the man officiated as the
singer, carried the rattles, and wore the hawk on his head; his
wife was dressed in the robe, wore the sage and magpie tail
feathers, used the ash stick to dig a small hole near the head of
the lodge, and "called up the buffaloes," as had been done by
Frog Earrings in the mythology. A young man, about to go to
war, asked the help of a bundle-owner belonging to his father's
clan and promised to make an offering to the bundle upon his
return. For this, he received a feather to wear on his head when
in battle.

778 The sacred robe was held in high regard as a means of ward-
ing off misfortune. Because of the wicked disposition and power
773 of Frog Earrings, whom the robe represented, it was believed
that men took to wearing women's clothing and followed female
[828] avocations. She was also believed to be the cause of insanity,
[826] feeble-mindedness, malformations, twisted jaws, and premature
[845] births.

SMALL HAWK MYTH RELATED BY BEAR ON THE FLAT[3]

773 It was the fall of the year. Corn Silk and her nine brothers were living to-
539 gether. Whenever any young man would ask her to marry him, she would re-
fuse. One of the brothers always spoke for the young man, but there was one
of them who never paid any attention to her or urged her to marry. A young
man, an unusually fine hunter, asked her to marry, and the brother who had
been silent was disappointed, for he thought she would surely marry this one.
He said to her, "I have never spoken before, so I think you should heed my
words. At other times, our other brothers acted as spokesmen. This man is
such a good provider you should marry him. You will have a comfortable
home and everything you need. I think you should listen to me."

Corn Silk did not obey the request, and the mother was angry and said, "One of your brothers never spoke, but this man was a good provider, and he

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3. Another version of this myth is reported in Martha Warren Beckwith, *Mandan-Hidatsa Myths and Ceremonies* ("Memoirs of the American Folk-Lore Society," Vol. XXXII [1938]), pp. 63–76.

Chapter XI

THE SNOW OWL CEREMONY

• 796 THERE were four separate rituals belonging to this bundle.
They were: (1) medicine feast to the owls; (2) arrowmaking
778 rites; (3) buffalo-calling rites; and (4) Holy Woman rites.

Each of these rites relates to a specific section of the sacred myth wherein Black Wolf was taken prisoner by the snow owl. The experiences of Black Wolf in his excursion into the sacred world formed the basis for the performance of the various rites. Although it was not possible to secure a detailed account of a bundle transfer, a number of informants had participated sufficiently in the various rites to secure an adequate picture of the mythological background and pattern of the ceremony in relation to the larger tribal ceremonial pattern.

The medicine feast to the two owls in the bundle followed the regular tribal pattern. Young men going to war would pledge a feast to the owls for success and would receive an article from the bundle to wear into battle. Several times during the bundle-owner's active years, he and those owning rights in the bundle would prepare a "renewal"[1] feast to the bundle. There was the usual period of preparation. To the feast would be invited all leading bundle-owners, who would pray for the success of the giver and receive goods for their part in the ceremony. At the close of the ceremony the bundle-owner and his family would be virtually destitute. Those dreaming of the snow owl and being otherwise eligible by the inheritance rules could buy rights in the owls and have new bundles made up. Sales could be made
796 four times. These subdivisions of main bundles seem to have
lost their hereditary character in a few generations.

778 The arrowmaking rites were associated with the two owls of
411 the bundle, and the arrowmaker's tools were given to Black

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[1] Renewal feasts were not unique to this bundle alone. All major tribal bundle-owners were expected to give renewal feasts from time to time to enhance the status of the bundles.

Wolf as payment for his services to these birds in the sacred 796
myth. According to tradition, only those who had purchased the 778
right made arrows. Arrowmaking techniques were taught by
certain bundle-owners. It is highly improbable that any living 411
informant at the time this study was made was able to enumerate all bundles with arrowmaking rights. At least the following, which is no doubt only a partial list, had arrowmaking rights: Eagle-trapping; Big Bird; Snow Owl; and Woman Above bundles. All of these bundles were associated with birds of prey.

The belief was that certain men were arrowmakers in early 796
times and that those in need of arrows bought their supply.
People without the rights were not allowed to stand around 424
when arrows were being made. Incidentally, pottery-making 463
was also a secret art, and the women bought the rights and knowledge in the techniques of their mothers or clanswomen, using only such designs as they were instructed to make. There was a song to the arrows and another when approaching the thicket where the shafts were secured. The stone tips were believed to have been first secured from the beavers.

The buffalo-calling rites were performed during the winter 796
and were initiated by a young man dreaming of the buffaloes. 224
Woman Living in Dog Den Butte (Buffalo Woman) had said in the myth, "In the future, when any Indian thinks of me, he must make offerings to me and give his wife to the one who is head of this medicine."

The three officers in the ceremony were (1) the bundle-owner 796
and his wives, who sat to the left side near the head of the lodge and were the singers; (2) a woman impersonating Woman Living in Dog Den Butte, who wore a buffalo robe with hair side out and had sage and magpie tail feathers in her hair, her place being at the head of the lodge; and (3) a man impersonating the brothers who lived in Dog Den Butte; he had red marks painted on his skin indicating the kinds of wounds a man could receive in battle, and his place was on the right side of the lodge near the door.

The Okipa lodge was used for the ceremony. After a young man had made the vow, robes and other goods were accumulated for the ceremony. A man received help from his wife, brothers, sisters, clan brothers and sisters, and the people of both his

•796 own and his wife's age-grade societies. During the period of preparation the bundle-owner came to the giver's lodge to instruct in the ceremony and to burn incense near the goods to be given away.

The ceremony was performed during four nights. The approach to the ceremonial lodge was made by four stages. At each stop the giver's wife came over to the group of performers led by the bundle-owner and placed on the ground a buffalo hide with a corn ball and a black stone pipe on it. The robe was taken by one of the party. The party advanced in single file, led by the bundle-owner, with the woman impersonating Woman Living in Dog Den Butte following just behind him. The third in line was the impersonator of the men in Dog Den Butte.

The fourth and last stop was at the door of the Okipa lodge. Men owning bundles containing buffalo skulls were eligible to attend and to sit on the right side of the lodge.

Usually a large number of clan brothers availed themselves of this opportunity to bring their wives and to receive the blessings of the older men. Each such participant brought additional goods for the occasion. The young men's wives were dressed only in their robes, while the woman impersonating Woman Living in Dog Den Butte wore a short buffalo robe with the hair side out. A small turtle shell was tied in place over her pudendal region.

The bundle-owner officiated as singer. The older men, representing buffalo bulls, and the woman, representing Buffalo Woman, were the only ones to dance. At the close of each [837] dance, a young woman would approach a man of her husband' father's clan selected by her husband and ask him to walk with her. He could buy himself off by praying for the success of the young woman and her husband and receive goods or go outside the village for intercourse. Food was passed around from time to time until late in the night when all returned to their respective lodges. The second and third nights' performance was the same as on the first. On the fourth night, the Woman Living in Dog Den Butte presented the giver with a bow and lance before termination of the dances and the man[2] near the door promised the group that all the bad luck to warriors fighting near Dog

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[2] Big Turtle (also called Black Panther), who represented the Hoita in the Okipa ceremony, held this office by virtue of his position in that ceremony.

Den Butte would be with the enemy. The performers were then 796
cleansed with sage by the leader and left the lodge. The giver and his wife remained to assist in the division of the goods. Then a man with rights in one of the Holy Woman bundles entered to announce that there were a great many holy women who were always working for the benefit of the Mandan.[3] These women came in dancing and received a part of the goods.

The officers of the ceremony, the giver, and his wife went to the bundle-owner's lodge where a sweat lodge was ready. After the cleansing ceremony, all received food prepared by the bundle-owner's wives.

Persons giving the ceremony within the memory of living informants were Standing Bear, Belly Up, Foolish Bear, and Bear on the Flat.

Women could buy the right to wear the buffalo robe, repre- 796
senting Woman Living in Dog Den Butte, and to dance in the 778
Buffalo-calling ceremony. She was also entitled to wear the magpie tail feathers and sage on her head, as well as to carry an ash digging stick when other women representing various Holy Women met to dance.

A complete bundle contained the following articles: (1) ar- 778
row-straightener of buffalo rib with perforations; (2) wooden groover; (3) rawhide with sand glued to it as polisher; (4) grapevine; (5) tanned fawnskin; (6) two feet of white owl; (7) two feet of the small owl; (8) yellow and black clay for painting; (9) one large white-owl wing feather; (10) gray sage; (11) bow and lance; (12) buffalo robe; (13) magpie tail feathers; and (14) plain black elbow pipe.

Hits on Back was the only owner of a complete bundle which 778
had come from Nuptadi Village. Inheritance was in the Waxi- 425
kEna clan, since the ceremony was related to the Okipa. Related 614
items in the bundle could be sold four times, but the last sale was of the entire original bundle.

When sales were made of portions of the bundle, transfer was from father to son or individuals in that relationship.[4] Partial

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[3] Actually, after the smallpox epidemic, there were few women holding rights in the Holy Women bundles.

[4] The practice of transmitting principal bundles within the clan and secondary or partial bundles from father to son is not unique to this ceremony along. See Old Woman Who Never Dies myth (chap. vi) and the Okipa ceremony (chap. iv) for additional data.

Chapter XII

PEOPLE ABOVE CEREMONY

796 778 THE ceremony is called HapminakE, meaning "Day Boat" or "Day Traveler." At least five distinct Mandan bundle lines were in existence in 1837, represented by Arrowhead Earrings (custodian of the Okipa lodge), who sold to his daughter, Spring Woman, and her husband, who sold to Calf Woman, principal contributor of data on this ceremony; Bull Otter, who sold to his son, Clam Necklace, who sold to his son Ole Bull (still living); Short Bull, whose bundle was bought by his daughter, Diamond Snake, who sold to her son, Percy Baker (still living); Red Buffalo Cow, who sold to his daughter, Antelope Woman; Four Bears, who died during the smallpox epidemic of 1837 without making a sale, although one son dreamed of the Old Woman Above and dressed as a woman thereafter. This is a greater number of bundle lines than it was possible to identify for the Hidatsa villages. The Arrowhead Earrings bundle was inherited in the clan and was considered the principal or original bundle. The other bundles were sold from father to son.

796 782 776 The ceremony was performed to the Sun, Moon, and Old Woman Above, their mother. Some bundle lines included rites to Old Woman Above's daughter,[1] an evil spirit who was blamed for much of the tribe's misfortunes. The ceremony differs in function from most ceremonies in that it was performed to ward off misfortunes sent by these evil mythological gods. Other sacred beings are either neutral or helpful, but not so with the Sun or his sister. They were cannibals and brought miscarriages, insanity, twisted faces, droughts, death, and misfortunes to the people. Ceremonies were rites of appeasement. The Sun was a cannibal who brought death to members of war parties and carried their bodies to his mother's lodge above, where she prepared them for his meals. He would not, however, knowingly

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[1] Called Omahank-Chika by Maximilian (see *Early Western Travels, 1748–1846*, ed. Reuben Gold Thwaites, XXIII [Cleveland, 1906], 302).

eat those he had sent dreams to or those who had his bundles 796
and gave feasts or offerings of goods to him regularly. The pres- 782
ence of so many bundle lines, both original and secondary, sur- 776
viving the smallpox of 1837, indicates the popularity of such
bundles.

This was a very difficult bundle ceremony to secure informa- 778
tion about. All tribal ceremonies were secret. The difficulty in
securing information on this ceremony was based on fear of 124
death. Calf Woman explained that, since she had joined the church and was not likely to sell rights in her other bundles four times, she was always willing to explain things in her other bundles. She had described everything Wilson and Lowie asked of her and never felt fear of the loss of good fortune.[2] She added:

> I showed you the masks yesterday that belonged in the Okipa ceremony. 778
> Of course, I smoked pine branches before I opened the bundle, but I always
> do that. I don't feel the same way about the Peope Above bundle. The Moon 776
> in the bundle doesn't worry me, but Sun is an evil spirit. He brought death to our warriors. My first husband was killed on the warpath even though his father and mother had a People Above bundle which together with my husband's sisters we would have had rights had he lived. So, you see, sometimes the Sun will even kill his own. It may be that the Sun had already blessed the enemy and adopted him as a son was why my husband was killed. This Old Woman Above is mean, but she is fair. Her daughter is evil; she causes men to leave their wives and little children; she causes insanity, fits, and feeble-mindedness. People are always careful to follow the rules belonging to these bundles, or their neighbors blame them when someone breaks a leg or has a tree fall on him. I worried last night because I had promised to tell you the myth.

Wolf Chief expressed the same fears when asked to explain 124
the Hidatsa ceremony to Woman Above. That there was a rich 776
ritualism connected with these bundles is evident from isolated data appearing in other sacred myths. There are a number of qualified informants, but to date it has been impossible to secure complete information from them. Variations no doubt existed between villages and even in bundle lines within the same village, but this could not be determined, since such information was not obtainable from Calf Woman.

Bundle purchase followed the normal tribal pattern. The in- 778
struction was directly between seller and buyer, which, when 425
completed, was followed by a medicine feast at the time the transfer was made. Attendance was limited to persons with

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[2] Gilbert L. Wilson and Robert H. Lowie.

bundle because Corn Silk also married a buffalo); and (15) one 778
stuffed jackrabbit, which served as a scout for Sun.

Bundle-owners had shrines on the prairies near the village which they were expected to maintain. Whenever these shrines became weathered and the images of Sun, Moon, and Woman Above had fallen down, the bundle-owner, someone who had either dreamed of the bundle, or one planning to lead a war expedition, pledged a feast to the People Above bundle (see Fig. 41). Bundle-owners also put on renewal feasts to their bundles several times during middle age.

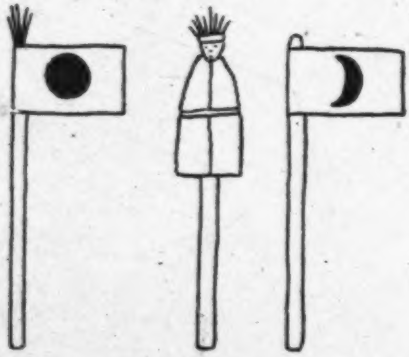

Fig. 41.—Images of People Above characters: Sun, Old Woman Above, and Moon

Calf Woman, who lived in the Okipa lodge with her parents 786 ●
and Arrowhead Earring (her mother's father), who was cus- 431
todian of the lodge, observed a bundle renewal ceremony in which Clam Necklace and his wives gave a feast for his bundle.

CALF WOMAN'S NARRATIVE OF A BUNDLE RENEWAL CEREMONY

Bears Ghost was asking my mother for the lodge [Okipa lodge]. He wanted to give the Snake ceremony [secondary bundle belonging with the Old Woman Who Never Dies bundles] for his parents, Foolish Chief and Dressed Up, from whom he was buying, when Clam Necklace came to ask for the lodge to give the People Above ceremony to his own bundle. He gave my mother several fine robes for the use of the lodge. He needed it for one day and night. She was glad that he was giving a feast to his own bundle, since he was a young man just building up his reputation. She had one of those bundles, and feasts like that gave her credit. He hung the robes on a line around the six central posts [see Fig. 42].

The older men and women of the tribe arrived shortly after dark. When it was time for the ceremony to begin, Clam Necklace came into the Okipa lodge with his face painted white except for a red half-circle extending from the cheeks across the forehead. In his hair he wore two bunches of sage, one white and representing the sun, the other black and representing the moon. He carried a robe and the ceremonial bundle, which he laid out on a bench at the back of the lodge. On his way to the back of the lodge, he gave his bundle to Stands Yellow to pray to, and she took one of the robes as payment. His two wives followed him to the back of the lodge.

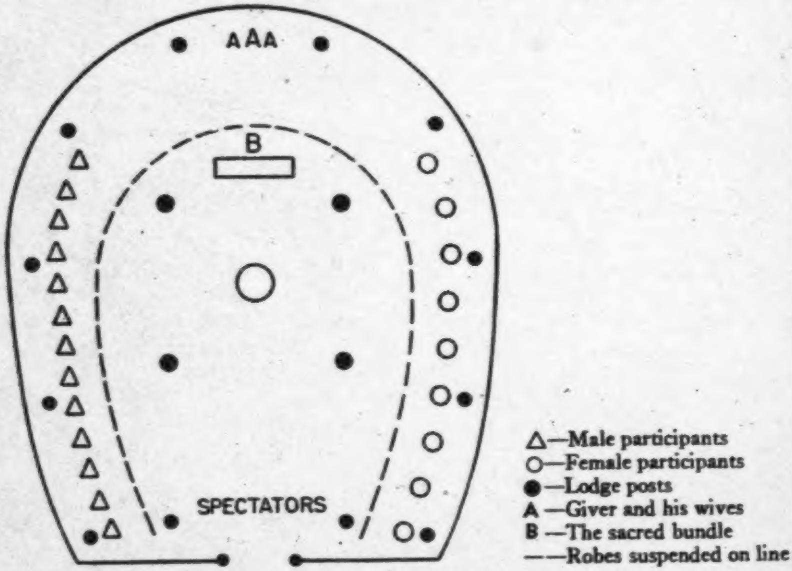

Fig. 42.—Lodge arrangement for People Above ceremony

First he chewed Black Medicine and blew it over himself and his wives; then he opened the bundle and spread the contents out on the robe laid on the bench. Although he took charge of the ceremony, his wives helped him in the singing. He burned pine needles brought from the Rocky Mountains. He sang the medicine songs through as he opened the bundle. As soon as the bundle was opened, the singing stopped. He placed food on the end of a stick and offered it to things in the bundle, after which all the visitors ate food passed around by his wives.

When the food was all eaten, Clam Necklace took a robe down from the roof, placed some object from the bundle on it, and called the name of the person to whom he presented the robe. The receiver of the gift prayed to his personal medicine objects to send good luck to the giver, then returned the medicine object, retaining the gift. When the robes were all given away, horses, dogs, calicoes, knives, moccasins, and dresses were given away. Each person receiving a gift prayed for the success of the giver. Clam Necklace gave presents to twenty-six people, fifteen of whom were women.

People receiving goods were: 796
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Women

- Big Chief Woman
- Spring Woman
- Lone Woman
- Hides and Eats
- Stays Yellow
- Unborn Calf Woman
- Penned Up
- Goes Out
- Owl Woman
- Beaver Woman
- Different Corn Silk
- Feather on Head Woman
- Otter Woman
- Eagle Woman
- Cedar Woman

Men

- Wolf Ghost
- Crows Breast
- Big Foot Bull
- Afraid To Be Chief
- Red Buffalo Cow
- Bull against Wind
- Red Shield
- Small Ankles
- Awaxniax (?)
- Belly Up
- Broken Ax

After the gifts were all presented, the people went home. Clam Necklace 796
and his two wives went outside the village near the scaffolds for the dead and
put up three new images, one of the Sun, one of the Moon, and another of the 778
Old Woman Above.

The image of the Sun consisted of a round red disk painted on white calico or hide. Chokecherry brush was lashed to the top of the pole. The Old Woman Above image was made of a robe, hair side out, wrapped around an ash pole, with a piece of black hide for the face and white sage for the hair. It was tied to the pole with a belt which held the image in place. Moon's image was a red crescent painted on a white calico or hide lashed to an ash post [see above, Fig. 41]. The images were set up before sunrise.

Bundles having Old Woman Above's daughter represented 778
added a fourth image. Instead of placing the images in a row 764
with mounds in front of Sun's and Moon's images, the four
images were placed at four corners of a square with the mounds
in the center. White sage was set into the ground at the apex of
the mound representing the Sun and black sage on the other
mound representing the Moon. When two buffalo skulls were
placed at the shrine, one was a bull's and the other a cow's skull.
When four skulls were used, they were bull's skulls and repre-
sented buffaloes of the four seasons. These shrines became fast-
ing places to which were brought skulls of relatives taken from
the scaffolds. Enemies whose skulls lay on the prairies were [727]
brought to these shrines by those fasting there. Children's skulls
were not placed in these circles.

The presence of enemy skulls in these circles was not unusual. 778
Men fasting on the hills often collected the skulls of their ene- 727
mies or went to the spot where the body lay to seek visions. 778

Maximilian referred to these shrines when he wrote:

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than skulls, which usually appear singly in refuse heaps, pits, 172
or shallow graves.

Women took an active part in these ceremonies. Calf Woman 796
thought that it was because they did not want their gardens
burned by Sun, who she said once tried to marry Waving Corn. 562
(People never prayed to the sun to bring warm weather. When 782
the winter was severe, they prayed to Lone Man of the Okipa
to come as the south wind.) When he was refused, he came four
times, and each time the plants withered. Women would fast
at these shrines to save their crops and ask help for their men
away on the warpath.

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Chapter XIV

RED STICK CEREMONY

THE Red Stick ceremony was a winter buffalo-calling rite 796 of four nights' duration and was held during the coldest part of the winter to bring the winter herds near the village. The ceremony was given by some young man who in his dream witnessed the ceremony given, heard the buffaloes singing the sacred song, or saw the ceremonial objects arranged in their proper place in his lodge.

Standing Bear, last bundle-owner before the disappearance 796 of the buffaloes, purchased the bundle from his father and 778 mother but, having no children, sold the bundle to Iron Eyes, who was not a relative.[1] The bundle consisted of a buffalo robe representing First Pretty Woman[2] and twelve flat boards painted red, with vestigial buffalo hoofs attached. One end was tapered to provide a handhold. There were a large wooden pipe, an owl, two hide rattles, a painted robe, and sage in the bundle.

There was only one song belonging to the ceremony, and it 796 referred to the information given by the twelve winter buffalo bulls who appeared during a blizzard and sang:

the one first woman pretty
has eaten most of you

The ceremony was based on a dramatization of the exploits 796 of Corn Silk, who brought back a little girl to the Mandan 773 Village. Each night the occupants of one earth lodge would disappear until the village became alarmed. The old men met to seek a solution to the mysterious disappearance of their people. One young man volunteered to fast in an effort to get advice from the spirits as to the cause of the misfortune to these households. A blizzard came in from the north, and twelve buffalo bulls, each carrying a red stick to which buffalo vestigial hoofs,

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[1] It was not possible to determine the rule of inheritance, since Standing Bear and his wives were of the same clan.

[2] Refer to the Okipa ceremony (chap. iv) for her part in those rites.

796 lungs, heart, and windpipe were tied, drifted along with the wind until they reached the foot of the hill where the young man
773 was fasting. They sang a song which mentioned the name of the young girl who was the cause of the disappearance of these families. She was destroyed by burning, which freed the people she had consumed. A sacred bundle was established by the young man. A buffalo robe represented the young girl, and twelve red sticks were carved to represent the twelve buffalo bulls.

778 Bundle transfer was traditionally from father to son,[3] but the information on actual transfers is so limited that it was not pos-
425 sible to check this belief with actual transfers. The ceremony was not given after the buffalo herds disappeared.

The pledge to give the ceremony could be made either by an
796 individual or by an age-grade society. In the case of the former,
778 clan brothers of about the same age assisted by bringing their wives with food and goods. The owner of the sacred bundle
561 would select twelve older men who had given the ceremony or who had sacred buffalo skulls, acquired through vision or purchase with bundles, to carry the red sticks. When an age-grade society gave the ceremony, the bundle-owner distributed the red sticks among the members of the next highest age-grade society who impersonated the buffalo bulls.

796 The ceremony was held in the giver's lodge. He paid those who carried the red sticks and the bundle-owner who set up the robe
778 of First Pretty Woman on an ash stake to represent a young girl. These carriers of the red sticks met at the bundle-owner's lodge in the evening to receive their ceremonial paraphernalia, after which by four stages they approached the lodge where the ceremony was being held. At each stop the giver's wife would put down a robe and a corn ball.

Upon entering the lodge where the ceremonies were to be held, the carriers placed the red sticks in a row extending from the fireplace to the head of the lodge, and the image of First Pretty Woman was placed to the right of them.

During the afternoon the Black Mouths sent their criers through the village announcing the buffalo dances were to be held that evening. Any of the old men could go and sit on the 796 right side nearer the door than the red-stick carriers. The young 778 men came in with their wives, who wore only buffalo robes, and sat on the left side of the lodge (see Fig. 43). There was only one ceremonial song; it was sung four times. The young women brought by their husbands formed a single line, where each sat down on her heels and walked the length of the red boards. The woman in the lead must be one who had never had intercourse [834] with anyone other than her present husband. The head of the line was a coveted position, and an attempt was sometimes made by an unqualified woman to lead the others over the red sticks. Then some man with whom she had had intercourse would laugh to make his presence known, whereupon she would drop out of line and take up the last place in the procession. The act of walking along the red sticks was known as "Walking with the Buffalo Bulls" or "Having Intercourse with the Buffalo

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[3] We cannot be certain that this is true. Owing to influences of the Hidatsa pattern,
177 Mandan bundles were in the process of shifting from clan to father-son inheritance during the eighteenth century. In numerous instances where informants stated inheritance was from father to son, genealogies showed inheritance to be within the clan.

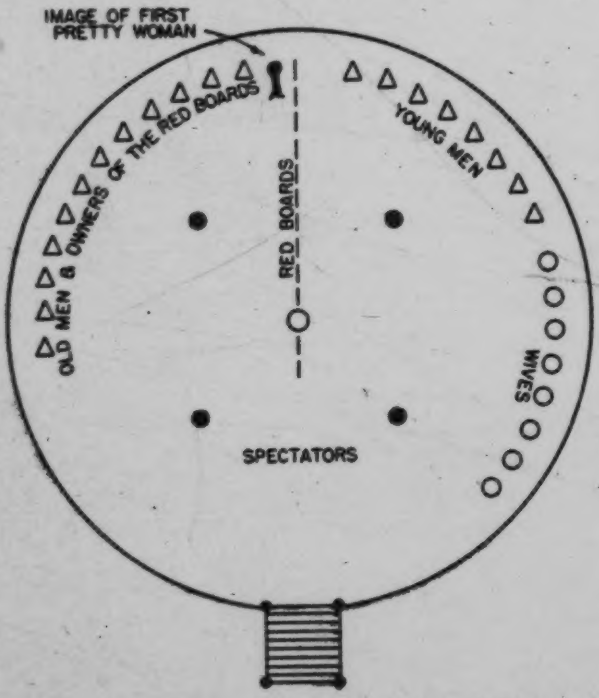
IMAGE OF FIRST PRETTY WOMAN
OLD MEN & OWNERS OF THE RED BOARDS
YOUNG MEN
RED BOARDS
WIVES
SPECTATORS

FIG. 43.—Arrangement of the lodge for the Buffalo Dance

796 Bulls." The women then returned to their places, put on their
778 buffalo robes, and passed around the food to the old men representing the buffalo bulls and to the spectators.

The next performance was the "Giving the Wives" to the
796 buffalo bulls.[4] One of the young men, addressing his wife, would
837 say, "Wife, I want you to help me to become a lucky man. I
614 want you to walk with my father."[5] The rule was for a young man always to select an old man of his father's clan. If the man selected did not choose to have intercourse with his "son's" wife, he would stop her before she reached the door.

One time when Red Coyote was selected, he said: "Stop right there, my 'granddaughter.' I want you to hold my medicine bundle now. Once I fasted four days in a ravine. While I slept, an owl came to me and said that I would be a lucky man and live to be old. I have killed an enemy, captured six horses, and struck three enemies. I pray that you will live a long time, be healthy, raise many children, and keep free of diseases."[6] Both returned to their places and sat down.

Each young man selected an old man to "walk with his wife."[7] Some men stopped the women at the door and did not care to go outside with them; others went outside. In either case, the woman was given the old man's medicine bundle (vision bundle), which she clasped to her breast, believing that, by doing so, some of its powers would enter her body.

An unmarried man could participate by bringing his brother's or clan brother's wife. Men never brought women of other

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[4] This portion of the ceremony appears to have been rather famous among the early visitors to the Mandan and Hidatsa (see *Original Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition 1804–1806*, ed. Reuben Gold Thwaites, I [New York, 1905], 245; *Tabeau's Narrative of Loisel's Expedition to the Upper Missouri*, ed. and trans. Annie Heloise Abel [Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1939], pp. 196–97; Maximilian in *Early Western Travels, 1748–1846*, ed. Reuben Gold Thwaites [Cleveland, 1906], XXIII, 334; XXIV, 27–31). In addition, Thompson and Henry saw portions of a similar ceremony but apparently misinterpreted the actions (see *David Thompson's Narrative of His Explorations in Western America, 1784–1812*, ed. J. B. Tyrrell [Toronto, 1916], pp. 225–38, and "Manuscript Journals of Alexander Henry and of David Thompson," in *New Light on the Early History of the Greater Northwest*, ed. Elliot Coues, I [New York, 1897], 326–27).

[5] This is what Good Bear said when he sent his wife to one of the old men, according to Mrs. Good Bear. "Father" refers to a male member of Good Bear's father's clan.

[6] Red Coyote was frozen in a late-spring blizzard near Rainy Buttes shortly after this.

[7] Mrs. Good Bear related that her ceremonial grandfather went out with her, all the while bellowing in imitation of a buffalo bull.

tribes who had recently married into the tribe, believing that 796
the spirits of the red sticks would then help the other tribe. 837
However, when such women had joined a Mandan clan, they 614
could participate.

Sometimes, when a man refused to walk with his "granddaughter," her husband placed a filled pipe before him. This left the old man one of two choices: (1) he could walk with her, or (2) he could invoke the spirits of the north that sent storms driving the buffaloes to the Missouri River to help her and her husband. A woman was not offered to a man of her own clan or to immediate blood relatives.

Mrs. Good Bear recognized this as a separate ceremony at the 796
lower village, Mitutanka, and did not believe that it was performed at Nuptadi in this form, as they had the Buffalo-calling rites of the Snow Owl ceremony, which was similar in some respects to the Red Stick ceremony. Scattercorn verified this information by stating that Standing Bear, who owned the Red Stick ceremony, came up early to Like-a-Fishhook Village (about 1845) together with the survivors of the lower village and that, after the Nuptadi survivors joined the other Mandans, both ceremonies were given but never at the same time.

The sacred myth belonging to the ceremony was related by Mrs. Good Bear.

RED STICK CEREMONY MYTH RELATED BY MRS. GOOD BEAR

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A long time ago there was a respectable young woman named Corn Silk who had then been single for several years. Many men wanted to marry her, but she always refused. One day her parents said, "Why don't you get married?" They scolded her, and she felt bad because they had quarreled. When night came, she went outside and lay on top of the doorway to the earth lodge to sleep and would not go into the lodge that night. She went to sleep.

When she awoke, someone was carrying her on his shoulders, and she knew that someone had her in his power. She couldn't get away. They went along until they came to his lodge. He put her in a bed, thinking that she was asleep, but she knew everything that happened. Then there was another woman, an owl, and a large grizzly bear in the lodge. The man asked Owl Woman to cook something for Corn Silk, and she began to prepare food. Then she said, "Corn Silk, you should get up and eat." Owl Woman brought water for her to wash with, and then she ate.

The man came in again and said to Owl Woman, "Send her into the woods to get fuel. Tell her to take the bear with her."

He walked out and then Owl Woman said, "You are a good and beautiful

Chapter XV

THE WHITE BUFFALO COW SOCIETY[1]

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THE two highest of the four women's age-grade societies, the White Buffalo Cow and Goose societies, were religious in character. The Goose Society[2] was organized, according to tradition, by Good Furred Robe to dance during the Corn ceremonies. During the time women were performing the ceremony, they would dream of corn or the supernatural beings associated with corn so that, when the time came to sell the society to younger women and buy into the next age-grade society, most women had minor rights in the Corn ceremonies and were invited to come to the corn feasts.

When Calf Woman was two years old, she was taken into the White Buffalo Cow Society to represent the buffalo calf. As a young woman she bought into the Goose Society. After selling out to younger women, she always attended and danced with the society. There was not the entire relinquishment of rights in the two highest Mandan women's societies so characteristic of the men's societies and the lower women's societies. Both Scattercorn and Calf Woman were in agreement that this was due to their religious character. The Goose Society was associated with the spring and fall migration of the birds and the summer Corn ceremonies. The White Buffalo Cow Society was associated with the winter migration of the buffalo herds from the flats to the river bottoms. The ceremony was held during the shortest days to bring the winter buffaloes. While the ceremony was in progress, the Black Mouth Society policed the winter village to see that none chopped wood, left the village to hunt, or had their dogs running loose. Announcement was given in advance that

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[1] See Maximilian in *Early Western Travels, 1748–1846*, ed. Reuben Gold Thwaites (Cleveland, 1906), XXIII, 297; XXIV, 48–49; Henry A. Boller, *Among the Indians* (Philadelphia, 1868), pp. 216–22; Robert H. Lowie, *Societies of the Hidatsa and Mandan Indians* ("Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History," Vol. XI [1916]), pp. 346–54.

[2] See Boller, *op. cit.*, pp. 147–49 and 283.

the ceremonies would begin at such a time, and the people were 561
expected to have a wood supply on hand. The people were expected 796
to be quiet, and stray dogs were either tied up or killed. Both Calf Woman and Scattercorn (her father, Moves Slowly, was singer for the Mandan women) believed that the society was founded by the Mandan and bought by the Hidatsa.

ORIGIN MYTH OF THE WHITE BUFFALO COW SOCIETY RELATED BY SCATTERCORN 773

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The White Buffalo Women's Society began from a dream a man once had
when he was fasting out on the hills. He dreamed that he heard a man calling 561
from far away. He continued to fast. The fourth night the voice was so clear that he could heard the words. The voice kept saying, "Put a child with them." Soon he saw a man coming with two small children in his arms.

The man said, "I am going to give you these two children. Prepare a feast, and I will return to you. I am the buffalo. When you have the feast ready, I will come; you will have plenty of buffaloes all the time."

The man who had been fasting came back to the village and told how a buffalo man had promised him that his people were coming to the village to give him two buffalo children. He asked that the people put up a feast of all the different varieties of corn. He asked two women to come and receive the two buffalo children.

Soon a party of strange women came to eat the food and showed them how to give the dance. When the women left, the two children struggled to free themselves because they wanted to follow the women. One got away, but the other one was kept in the village. The child was reared in the tribe, and it was from this feast that the White Buffalo Society began.

Each winter the women came back to see the child. They were the buffalo cows, so the society danced to give the buffaloes a chance to see their child. The buffalo women would bring the winter buffalo herds with them.

The rule was that a woman should not belong to this society until she was 561
beyond the childbearing age. This was the highest and last society to which women could belong. Women could not be members while they still had menstruation periods, as it was believed that the blood would drive the buffaloes away.

The society kept four men as singers. They bought their rights and could 561
sell out whenever they wanted to. Before the ceremony of selling was held,
the women put up a sweat-lodge frame which resembled an inverted bullboat 796
frame. The ones buying must supply five or six robes for the cover. Each one buying gave a wooden dish and robes to one of the older women, whom she called "mother," to get her rights in the society. One person was selected to buy the leader's robe, which was white. As soon as the sale was concluded, the new society women lined up. The leader would be on the end of the line wearing the white buffalo robe with the hair outside. The child, a little girl between the years of two and nine, stood in the center of the line wearing a robe with the hair side out. A woman at the end of the line wore the robe of a summer buffalo and was called the summer buffalo. All the other women wore their robes with the hair side in. A woman standing next to the child burned the

561 incense and smoked the clothing they wore. The child represented the small buffalo calf left in the tribe by the buffalo women.

796 The dance was symbolic of the return of the buffaloes. All wore a band of buffalo hide around the arms and forehead, in which were tied owl and magpie feathers. The head woman wore a headband of white buffalo hide.

The dance was performed in the winter during the shortest days. Its purpose was to bring the buffalo herds back to the villages. It also was believed to bring cold weather, causing the herds to desert the flats for the sheltered river bottoms. Failure to have given the dances would have resulted in small herds or none at all. Someone always paid to have the dances.

CALF WOMAN'S NARRATIVE OF THE WHITE BUFFALO COW SOCIETY

561 159 I was two years old when I went into the Hidatsa White Buffalo Society, and the women would carry me on their backs in the dance. The singers were Crows Paunch, Bear Looks Out, Poor Wolf, and Red Wing (a Mandan).

The Goose Society was first, and the women selling out the Goose Society bought in. The society also came from the Mandan, but it passed over to the Hidatsa long before the Goose Society was passed over. Women were forty-five to fifty years old when joining. Bear Looks Out and Poor Wolf liked the ways of the society, and they went to the Mandan and bought singer rights.

The members of the society were: Calf Woman (a child), Otter, Dances Along, Different Sage, Root, Lone Woman, Good Paint, Long Hair, both of the Sioux Women, All Blossoms, Flying, Spring Woman, Cherry Women, and all those who had belonged to the Goose Society except Juneberries. I am today the only Mandan or Hidatsa with rights in the society.

After a group of women sell their rights in the Goose Society, they still have the right to attend their meetings and dance. [Scattercorn verified this.]

Everything in buying is the same as with the Goose Society, and the sale is made in the late fall. They meet each night for sixty nights; during that time those who are buying the society bring in food for the society they are buying out. At the end of the sixty nights, the older people give the clothing needed in the ceremony to the ones who are buying in.

Otter wore the white robe; I was the middle person wearing the little calf robe. Flying was the third person to wear one of the special robes of a calf and was well into the forties at that time.

561 796 159 We would meet in the wintertime when the days were the coldest, also in early winter when the days were shortest. The leader wore the white robe; they called her "white robe." The middle one wore a calf robe; she was called "good calf robe." *MitE'atu'ki* means "white robe." The third officer is "keeper of the incense." They make incense of a fine, pulpy, yellow material such as is used in the Bear ceremony. It comes from the Crow Indians. Lead or Lone Woman [mother's sister of Calf Woman] was "keeper of the incense." The last woman in the line holds the robes over the smoke before they put them on. They dance in a circle just like in the Goose Society. The singers in the Goose Society kept their rights even when the women sold out. Two women sit back of the woman with the white robe, wearing skunk headdresses, and it is their job to look after the spectators. Lone Woman attended to the incense, taking incense to the first three officers, then to the buffalo skull and finally around to all the women and the singers. They dance in the winter when they want the buffaloes to come and any other time, except when warm

enough for the crops, upon invitation. When they sing the songs in the spring after the crops are in, the frost will kill all the plants, so they are afraid to sing or dance then. They would not meet often in the wintertime if someone did not offer them a feast. They feel that they must dance once in the year, anyway, even though no one puts it on. Then they smoke the robes and skull before dancing. All the dancers wear a headband of white buffalo hair, two magpie tail feathers, and white down feathers of the eagle together with owl

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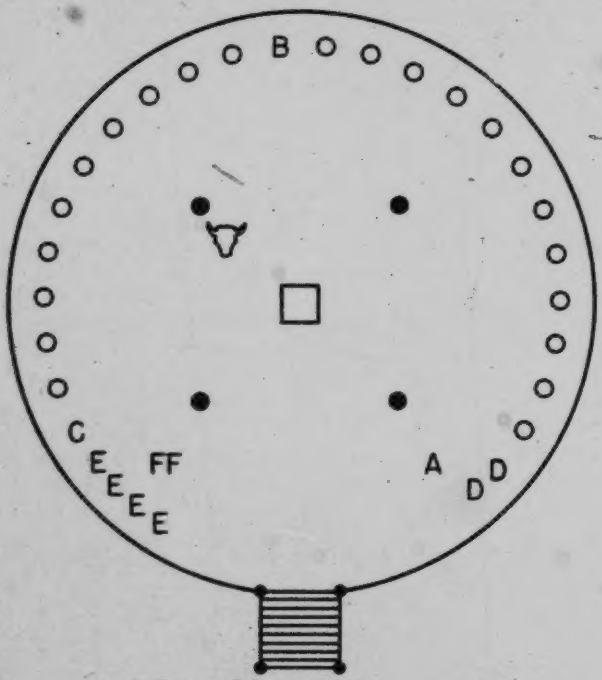

A, Keeper of the ceremony
B, Child representing Buffalo Calf
C, Woman representing Summer Buffalo
D, Women acting as waiters
E, Singers
F, Giver of ceremony and wife

FIG. 44.—Lodge plan of the White Buffalo Cow Women's Society

feathers. They dance four times beginning in the evening, and it takes them until late into the night. The fourth time they dance, Lone Woman stands up and takes all their robes off so they dance in their buckskin dresses. The person giving the ceremony would sit with his wife next to the singers and toward the door (see Fig. 44).

They always meet in the leading woman's lodge, in this case Otter's lodge. Otter had three daughters, three sisters, and a mother living in that lodge, and that way there were eight of them; they would hitch up their dogs and bring in wood and water for the ceremony. She had three sons and a son-in-law, and they brought the buffalo meat. That was what they had when they danced.

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She was "Keeper of the Ceremony," and, when they danced, she fed the whole society. If another was putting on the ceremony, it would still be best to hold it in Otter's lodge. Old Packineau used to invite them in often. Otter made corn balls for the ceremony, and after the first dance she passed small pieces to each of the women.

The Mandan White Buffalo Society singers were Moves Slowly, Red Buffalo Cow, Short Bull, and Iron Eyes; Brown Nose, wife of Bear on Water, was the leader.

One time they danced in winter camp north and opposite to Independence. While they danced, a buffalo came and walked up to the door, and they killed it there.[3] They would take my little robe and all the headdresses to tie to a stick. They put them outside of the lodge in the morning after dancing all night; then in the evening they would take them back, doing that every day and taking them down for the four nights of dancing. During the four days of the ceremony, they stayed at the lodge, sleeping there when the ceremony was not in session. After the dance, each woman made corn balls. One of the singers with his rattle, in this case it was Red Wing, would sprinkle water on them. When he did that, the people would come in. They passed the corn balls around four times to the people who came to look on. They would place their headdresses and robes in a row with corn balls in front of each one. Then the owners would come and take the corn balls that were placed in front of their robes. They gave Red Wing many things for doing this for the women and singers, and he was the one who got the principal reward for it all.

There were four old women in the group who sold out, Corn Woman, Brave Woman, Spring Woman, and All Blossom. Each had from four to six younger women whom they had to claim as "daughters." They had to give the younger ones robes and clothing to be used in the ceremony. Corn Women had no daughters of her own. Spring Woman had one daughter (myself) and took as her daughters, Cherries, Long Hair, Many Yellow, Root, Different Sage, Flying Woman—seven in all, but not all were of the Chicken clan. Brave Woman took in Calf Woman, Cherries, and Peppermint. Corn Woman took in Lone Woman, the two Sioux Women, and another Cherry Woman. All Blossom took in all the rest of the women who were left. Red Wing had Crow Paunch, Bear Looks Out, and Poor Wolf. Red Wing was the only one of the old singers who had belonged with the four old women. Before dancing, the women painted the left side of their faces red and the right side blue with clay. They wore buckskin dresses and robes, but three had special robes and headdresses and painted their temples. The singers dressed in any manner they wished and also used any face paints they wanted.

After the ceremony was over, Red Wing cleansed the articles and each put her things away carefully, ready for the next ceremony. After that, different ones would invite us to their lodges immediately to feast, and then we would go back to our own lodges, having been away for four nights. I was the only girl in my family, and they thought so much of me that they urged and helped me to join different societies.

At Like-a-Fishhook Village the Mandan and Hidatsa kept their ceremonies separate. The Mandan met in Moves Slowly's lodge. He was head singer, getting his rights from Corn Woman's father, Enemy Face.

The ceremony in the two tribes was identical. The songs were alike also.

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[3] See *ibid.*, p. 305, for a reference to a similar incident.

Chapter XVI

ADOPTION PIPE CEREMONY

THERE were many people, both men and women, owning 796
rights in this ceremony. Although Crows Heart believed 778
that the ceremony was bought from the Arikaras a long time ago, Maximilian[1] recognized two types of sacred pipes, one[2] of which had been in the tribe for a long time and which he could have seen for one hundred dollars. He describes in detail the adoption ceremony, which is in every sense identical to Crows Heart's account. The two pipes carried in the ceremony are one belonging to the seller and one the purchaser was to receive. This ceremony performed an important social and religious role. The Hidatsa and Mandan adoption were identical as to ritual and songs.

In reality it was the pipe stem that was sacred, since the red 778
stone bowls could be removed for daily use, whereas the stems were kept in bundles and were not taken out, except preliminary to an Adoption Pipe ceremony. Crows Heart is probably correct in his statement that the ceremony was bought of the Arikara, since this is the only instance when red stone pipes were used for ceremonial purposes. Objection to red stone is based on the myth wherein Good Furred Robe, in early times, was unable to introduce redstone pipes because they were the color of human blood.[3]

Crows Heart, who had been adopted twice, supplied the in- 796
formation on the adoption ceremony.

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CROWS HEART'S NARRATIVE OF THE ADOPTION CEREMONY[4] 778

The old Mandans told me that the sacred pipes were bought from the Arikara quite a long while ago. The stand represents the cornstalks; the horse

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[1] See Maximilian in *Early Western Travels, 1748–1846*, ed. Reuben Gold Thwaites (Cleveland, 1906), XXIII, 319–21.

[2] This was known as the Corn Pipe and was in no way connected with the adoption ceremony.

[3] See Okipa ceremony origin myth (chap. iv).

[4] Lewis and Clark witnessed an adoption ceremony, but furnish few details (see *Original Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, 1804–1806*, ed. Reuben Gold Thwaites [New York, 1905], I, 222).

796 597 778 tail hairs represent the corn silks; the stem represents an ear of corn; the birds' heads are connected with the Old Woman who tends the crops. I heard that the red heads on the pipe are from a bird that lived a long ways below Fort Yates.[5] The Indians down there brought them up here and traded them for horses and corn.

796 597 If I want to adopt, I go to a young man who is son of a man who belongs to my clan, which is the Prairie Chicken clan. We never adopt a person who has no horses but select a man who has the finest buffalo horses. If I want to get his horses, I go out and kill a deer or possibly a buffalo, and my wife prepares a feast. Then I invite him to come with his family and visit us. My wife cleans the earth lodge up and puts down a good robe for him to sit on. When he gets through eating, and they cannot eat it all, his wife takes what is left over from the meal and goes home. Then we sit together and smoke, and I say to him, "I want to adopt you as a son, and I want to fix up my medicine pipe for you." He will always accept. If he refused, others would hear about it and say bad things about him.

When he agrees, I inquire, "How many of you will be in the family?" He will include the wife, the children, and may even include his small brothers and sisters, until there are probably six of them in all. When all is agreed upon, I tell him that I will give him the pipe many days, usually about a month, later. In the meanwhile I look around for presents and usually get together some good moccasins and leggings for the man, his wife, and their children. Sometimes we have elks' teeth, and we decorate a dress for his wife. If one is not able to get all the things he needs, he goes to his brothers and sisters for help.

796 778 597 Four days before I am to give the pipe, I invite all the old men who have these medicine pipes to come to my lodge, and we work together repairing a pipe stem. There is a song that goes with the pipes, and we sing that and burn sweet grass before we open the bundle that contains the stem. Eagle tail feathers of the young eagle [black tips] are then put on the stem, and a red pipe is fitted onto it. The pipe is repaired each time a man is adopted.

796 597 On the day that the adoption is to take place, all the men having medicine pipes go to the lodge of the man who is adopting the son and dress up in the fine clothes that are to go to the young man. Then all the men go out onto the prairie and make a hole in the ground representing a duck's nest. These men form a circle around the nest, holding their own medicine pipes and singing the songs that go with the pipes. By the time the men return to the village, the young man will be ready with his horses tied to the lodge, one horse for each person going into the adoption ceremonies with him. The pipe medicine people, coming in from the prairie, go directly to the young man's lodge, singing and beating drums all the while. The man doing the adopting goes ahead, carrying the pipe.

When they reach the door of the young man's lodge, all stop singing. One of the men who killed an enemy and destroyed his tepee or had other good luck in war counts his coups; how he charged a tepee, killed all, took the blankets, or whatever his record is. This man goes in first, and all the others follow. They sing and walk around the fireplace once while the man doing the adopting goes to the young man and asks him to stand up and go with him. Other Medicine Pipe men each take a boy or girl of the young man's family

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[5] See Maximilian, *op. cit.*, pp. 319–21.

796 and all go to the place where the dance is to be held. They sing the medicine song as they go.

597 The lodge selected for the dance is the large Okipa lodge, which can be prepared easily for the occasion. There will be at least twelve singers with drums and two dancers, one with a pipe and the other with a rattle. Nearly all the people in the village will come in for at least a few minutes, for everyone is curious to see the clothes the old man will give the young man, and the buffalo horses that he will receive. People must give good clothing and horses, or these people will speak unkindly of them. When the dance is over, the boy's clan and society come in to help him out and bring with them shirts, blankets, and leggings which are piled up before the young man.

It is then announced that the person adopted is going to be bathed and dressed by the head of the medicine pipe people. The young man is led to the center of the room, and four bunches of rushes are brought in and placed before him in the form of a square. A dish made of rushes is brought in filled with water, and one of the Medicine Pipe men steps up, counts his coups, and punches a hole through it so that the water runs onto the young man's body. A wildcat's hide is used to dry his body. None of the others in his family are bathed.

Then the young man returns to his seat, and men with blankets held out hide those who are being adopted while they are fitted out in the new clothes. Each is painted with red paint over the mouth, one streak over the nose, and two streaks over the eyes. A fine black-tipped eagle feather is put in the hair of each person adopted; then all are paraded around so that each person there can see them.

[431] Then the horses are led into the lodge. There will be as many horses given as there are people in the family being adopted. The pile of goods brought in by the young man's friends and clan brothers is given out to the men of the Medicine Pipe Society as their pay for helping in the ceremony. When all the things have been passed out, the dancing continues for a while.

After a while the young man says to the adopted father, "Father, come over to my house and rub off my paint."

All the Medicine Pipe men go to the young man's lodge, where there is a feast. The young man is then given the pipe, and his wife is given one ear of yellow corn. The head man of the Medicine Pipe Society makes a motion as though to wash the young man, after which the young man rubs the paint off.

The old man says, "Son, I have given you my pipe. You can adopt four times. After that you can't adopt any more."

778 597 We respect these pipes highly, take them with us to war, and pray to them often at such times. We call them medicine pipes because of the powers they have. All the people who have such pipes belong to a society and meet at times to open their bundles and smoke the pipes. We never use them for everyday smoking.

597 A man sometimes adopts a daughter, and she, in turn, can adopt a young man and give him a pipe, or she may adopt another woman, whichever she wishes to do. Only the men go out on the prairies to build the nest and sing the Medicine Pipe songs, however.

[p.332 is blank]

Chapter XVII

SUMMARY

•796 THE ceremonies were highly formalized and were in part
773 organized on an annual basis. The Mandan attributed
776 their creation and appearance on the earth to certain magical acts of the sacred beings who preceded them to prepare the world before creating all the living things. It was believed that the sacred beings protected the people so long as the ceremonies were performed. The Mandan also believed that other peoples created by the same sacred beings in mythological times performed similar ceremonies and that the sacred beings favored those tribes making the most lavish ceremonial display of goods. It was believed that good relations must exist with all the sacred beings. To accomplish this, segments of the total ceremonialism were intrusted to certain individuals or groups of individuals, and the novice was informed that failure to perform the rites in the prescribed manner would bring bad luck.

778 Sacred objects were believed to have *xo'pini*, which inform-
785 ants translated as meaning "power." An individual's "power" was said to increase if he fasted frequently, assisted others in the purchase of sacred bundles, or bought tribal bundles. This "power" was consumed when leading war parties, being largely gone at the end of the fourth expedition, when a man was expected to terminate his war expeditions. This "power" was believed to be lost a little at a time in the daily life of crossing rivers, hunting buffaloes, training horses, or performing other hazardous avocations. A man was believed to acquire a great
[837] deal of *xo'pini* from the buffaloes when he invited older men to have ceremonial sexual intercourse with a wife, and, by the same token, men frequently refused intercourse when they had partaken in a number of the "walking" ceremonies. Very old people were believed to have less *xopini*, having given most of it away to the younger people, particularly the men, who re-

778 quired much "power" to pursue successful war and hunting
activities.

785 A Mandan would say, "I claim no power for myself. I have no power except what my sacred objects have promised me." Children were protected by the parents' bundles until they were old enough to fast.

778 A young man on his first war expedition usually carried a
sacred object from his father's bundle. This practice was repeated until the potency of the son's sacred bundle was established.

Supernatural power was acquired by the purchase of tribal
789 bundles, feasts to tribal bundles, ceremonial sexual license, self-torture, and by showing kindness to the old people. The Mandan also believed that some people were "adopted" by a supernatural being without the novice's knowledge, since some people possessing no important tribal or individual bundles were unusually successful.

Women participating in sexual ceremonialism during the buf-
789 falo-calling rites contributed to the husband's supernatural
796 "powers." The writer interviewed a number of women who had
837 "walked with the buffaloes," as the practice is called. All agreed
that they sought a good home, a loyal husband who was success-
787 ful in hunting and warfare, good health, and plenty of food and clothing. They believed that the sexual act was tantamount to intercourse with the buffaloes, who, when placated, sent the herds to the prairies near the villages and promised the warriors success in warfare. Ceremonial sexual intercourse strengthened the marital bonds. It was believed that the buffaloes did all that they promised in dreams. Dreams were easy to get from the buffaloes.

778 The concept of "power" as a substance was further demon-
strated by the manner of handling sacred objects. During the
789 buffalo-calling ceremonies, the men impersonating buffaloes held out their sacred bundles for the women to press to their naked breasts. A woman placed her arms on the "holy man," dragging her arms downward toward the hand holding the bundle as though drawing the sacred powers possessed from the body into the sacred bundle, which was then taken from the buffalo impersonator and held to her breast. By this act it was

believed that the supernatural powers were transferred to her 778
own body. These supernatural powers were in turn transmitted 789
to her husband in the daily activities of living and working to-
gether. Men receiving sacred objects either to own or to hold
took them in the same manner but did not hold them to the
breast.

The faith of the Mandan in their sacred objects was unshaken 778
by two severe smallpox epidemics. They speak of these epi-
demics as unfortunate and explain the impotency of their rites 731
to protect the tribe on the grounds that, when the original cere-
monies were introduced into the tribe, the sacred beings made
no promise of tribal immunity to the white man's diseases. They
believe that the tribe would have been exterminated by their
enemies subsequent to the last smallpox epidemic had the cere-
monies been abandoned.

The Mandan sacred bundles fall into two general categories. 778
They are (1) the hereditary tribal bundles and (2) the personal
bundles. Of these two groups of bundles, the former played a
more significant role in the total ceremonial life and in a large
measure set the background for the supernatural experiences
which instituted the personal bundles.

At this point it would be well to indicate some of the general 778
characteristics of these bundles not indicated in the main body
of the report. The Mandan place greatest values on those 796
bundles and ceremonies which traditionally were instituted in
very early times. Foremost of these are the Okipa, founded by
Lone Man and Hoita, and those Corn ceremonies which were
founded by Good Furred Robe. Not only are these two cere-
monies considered oldest, but they also involve the greatest
number of participants.

The Okipa was without question the most complicated and 778
colorful ceremony performed in the Northern Plains. According 796
to tradition, the principal officers of the ceremony belonged to
the WaxikEna clan. This clan was intrusted with the care and 614
repair of the sacred cedar and other sacred objects appertaining 428
to the ceremony. A male member of that clan occupied the
sacred lodge and acted as announcer whenever tribal cere-
monies were performed. A man selected one of his own clan to
become his son-in-law to perpetuate the lineage in the sacred

778 lodge. The principal officer of the Okipa was the Lone Man,
who, traditionally, belonged to the WaxikEna clan. The rights
796 to impersonate Lone Man were inherited through the WaxikEna
614 clan. A buyer was assisted by his brothers and sisters, who
428 became secondary owners in the bundle. Should the buyer die,
a brother was entitled to officiate until a new owner was qualified.
When the bundle-owner had no brothers, the sisters' husband
was authorized to officiate by performing a ceremonial
feast to the bundle until a qualified successor in the clan was
[604] selected. The bundle and office passed from a man to his sister's
son. A man could sell his rights in the office four times, but few
sales were made in later years, since there were two separate
bundle lineages representing the two villages built near Fort
Clark which were adequate to meet ceremonial needs. In fact,
one of these lineages died out shortly after 1837 and was never
re-established. The Hoita lineage, though theoretically in the
WaxikEna clan, was, in historic times, held temporarily by a
member of the Tamisik clan.

778 Although villages were reported to be largely independent
ceremonially, they were not entirely so. The three sacred turtle
621 drums were kept by individual members of the WaxikEna clan
at Nuptadi Village, one of the east-side villages of the Heart
River group, and were borrowed by the other villages when the
Okipa was to be performed. In later years when the tribe moved
to Fort Clark, these drums were kept at the Upper Village situated
near Deapolis. Each village was believed to possess its own
complement of officers. There was, however, a certain amount
of collaboration between villages when new officers were receiving
training.

778 The sacred cedar was erected in each village if the village
group had a complete complement of Okipa officers. It was the
621 rule that, whenever a ceremony or organized social event was
361 performed in the summer village, out of respect to Lone Man,
whose body was represented by this inclosed post, the group
should dance once at this sacred shrine. On these occasions,
[431] gifts of robes or other clothing were placed over the cedar as an
[782] offering to the Lone Man and became the property of the
WaxikEna clan. The Mandan considered the entire open-circle
area inclosing the sacred cedar sacred also. Even as late as

1929, informants unwilling to divulge sacred lore were equally 778
unwilling to divulge the arrangement of lodges around this 621
circle. Their explanation was that the area was sacred because 361
they had suffered there during the Okipa, standing at this point in the village when thongs were inserted in their flesh for dragging buffalo skulls, or because so many ceremonies had been performed there. When ceremonies were performed at the winter camps, it was customary to leave goods at the sacred cedar when returning later to the summer village.

Mandan informants disagree relative to the purpose of per- 796
forming the Okipa ceremony. All give a number of reasons; they are: to bring buffaloes to the village; to acquaint young people with the history of the tribe; to give the young men an opportunity to fast. White Calf thought that the principal reason for performing the ceremony was to bring all the gods back so that all the holy beings would be working for the Mandan and not their enemies. He remarked that summer was the season when the gods, particularly the big birds, returned. At this point it is interesting to note that, although a restricted number of officers were intrusted with the direction and performance of this ceremony, on the third day, known as "Everything Comes Back Day," characters represented in the ceremony comprised most of the major bundle-owners of the village.

The person pledging the ceremony was known as the Okipa 796
Maker. The ceremony was considered a "sacred feast to tribal
bundles," and the benefits accruing to the Okipa Maker were 554
comparable to those received when offering a feast to any other sacred bundles. He received a section of a sand-bar willow for his sacred bundle and was entitled to participate in important tribal discussions. There was no clan restriction as to performance. However, only those who had demonstrated bravery and industry were permitted to give the ceremony.

The principal officers of the Okipa were Lone Man and 796
Hoita impersonators and the singers. They received their
rights after undergoing formal training. For new officers, tribal 793
recognition of their authority was given at a ceremonial feast held prior to the performance of the Okipa. Actually, one desiring to participate in the Okipa and being eligible according to the rules of inheritance underwent instruction at an early age,

796 793 buying subsidiary rights until, when reaching maturity, he had full knowledge of the ceremony. The teaching of a ceremony by sections characterized the entire ceremonial pattern of the Mandan and constitutes one of the major differences between Mandan and Hidatsa ceremonial training, the latter tribe giving the instruction in its entirety at the time of bundle sale.

796 173 The Mandan believed that the Okipa began as a simple buffalo dance at a time when the tribe was small and life was simple and that the ceremony grew in complexity as the tribe increased in numbers and complexity. Crows Heart explained that, as new tribal bundles were added, additional impersonators were added for the "Everything Comes Back Day." The changes instituted since the ceremony was described by Catlin and Maximilian were insignificant. The number of singers was reduced to three, and the torture feature was performed outside the ceremonial lodge.

796 241 It is significant to note that, in spite of the prominent place of agriculture in the Mandan economic life, little recognition was given to agriculture in the "Everything Comes Back Day" of this important ceremony. The Old Woman Who Never Dies was represented together with other holy women by two men dressed as women, and those of one moiety rubbed their wounds with corn meal. Otherwise, little recognition was given to agriculture.

796 773 The importance of mythology in Mandan ceremonialism should not be minimized.[1] Left to his own resources in describing a ceremony, a Mandan informant invariably introduced the subject by first relating the myth. These myths explain the peculiar topography of the Mandan country with lakes and sloughs to the east, badlands and streams to the west, and the Missouri River dividing the two. These sacred myths even explain the creation of the white men and their cattle on the east bank of the Missouri River, where, in mythological times, they were found to be too weak to survive and were sent back across the ocean. When the writer showed Bear on the Flat fossilized clam shells and wood in coal-bearing beds, he immediately explained their presence in terms of the flood sent by Maniga to

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[1] Lowie writes: "Several Plains tribes—notably the Hidatsa, Blackfoot, and Arapaho—utilize widespread tales to account for the origin of rituals" (Robert H. Lowie, *Myths and Traditions of the Crow Indians* ["Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History," Vol. XXV], p. 8).

destroy the Mandans. Sacred myths played an important role 796
in the interpretation of situations arising from time to time. 773
First of all, these myths constituted the traditional history of
the tribe, and the Mandan were accustomed until a few years
ago to return from time to time to these sacred places at and
near the Heart River to examine these shrines. My informants
often remarked that they would have forgotten many of these
stories had they not been able to see for themselves what the
older people had explained.[2]

The sacred myths expressed a fundamental pattern of conduct 773
which regulated and to a certain degree regimented the
population. The fear of accident or misfortune being ever present, 626
those possessing a considerable knowledge of tribal lore
were consulted frequently by those not so well informed. A
young man accustomed to consult his elders on important matters
was considered wise, and the older people would say,
"He will become eminent because he endeavors to regulate his
behavior along the line laid down by the sacred things long
ago."

The sacred myths established psychological relationships between 796
bundles which to the student of Mandan ceremonialism
are otherwise not understandable. In the natives' minds certain 778
bundles are related, and, when a ceremony for one of the 773
bundles of the complex was held, those having bundles believed
to be related were expected to attend. The Old Woman Who
Never Dies rites will illustrate this point. Since this culture hero
formerly cared for her gardens along the Missouri River, the
psychological relationship with the Corn Skull bundles is evident.
The association of the Bear bundles with this rite become
intelligible only when examining the sacred myth in which it is
said that she used the grizzly bear for a dog because she was so
powerful that all animals were her slaves. Additional information
on this point appears in the accounts of the various ceremonies
which appear above.

Ceremonies were native dramatizations of the sacred myths. 796
In native theory, the details of the ceremony continued un- 773

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[2] Differences in myths and rites now recognized by the older Mandan probably represent cultural differences between villages which become apparent only when the survivors of the Heart River villages united to occupy a single village.

changed from generation to generation. When no sacred myth
796 belonged to the ceremony or there were no sacred instructions
773 at the time of the inception of the ceremony, the Mandan believed these ceremonies were borrowed of neighboring tribes. The Adoption Pipe ceremony belonged in this category. The sacred myth enumerated the benefits which would accrue to the tribe and the giver of the ceremony when the rites were performed.

773 The sacred myths were the basis for an extension of the kin-
ship system to include the world of the supernatural. First Cre-
602 ator was addressed as "very old one," while Lone Man, who as-
776 sisted him in the creation of the earth, was addressed by persons of the WaxikEna and Tamisik clans as "ptawadatodE" or "mother's brother." Those of the opposite moiety addressed him as "father." Sun and Moon were "father" and their sister was "father's sister." Their mother was addressed as "grandmother," a term also used for the various holy women of the ash groves, the field mice, the corn mill, and all female beings present on the earth on the "first day of creation." An individual addressed a sacred being appearing in a dream and not belonging to the category of tribal gods as "father" if a male and "father's sister" if a female.

778 The Mandan system of bundle inheritance shows evidence of
change within the last century. Certain bundles and ceremonial
425 rights traditionally inherited through the clan and more specifi-
428 cally from the mother's brother, such as the Okipa belonging to
614 the WaxikEna clan and the Shell Robe bundle of the Prairie Chicken clan, showed a tendency to change to a father-son inheritance of the Hidatsa pattern. The eagle-trapping lodges were still inherited through the clan as late as 1929, but the associated bundles had changed from clan inheritance to father-son inheritance after 1875. The system of inheritance was more flexible than for the Hidatsa, with whom they were intimately associated. At first I was inclined to believe that this greater flexibility was due, in part at least, to the breakdown of the older system, an opinion which I have now abandoned. The Mandan parents often selected their daughters' husbands and gave them preliminary assistance in ceremonial matters. The sons and daughters of a household usually purchased the par-

778 sacred bundles they had acquired, providing, of course, they
had been successful in life and had not "kicked the stone." One
554 having repeated bad luck usually put his bundles away and
sought new vision experiences. This could not be done with tribal
bundles. The only instance on record of an attempt to dispose
425 of a tribal bundle was made by Red Bird in 1838, a year after
778 the smallpox epidemic when he lost a son of smallpox. A son-in-law
offered to buy the bundle and received tribal approval of the
transfer. Personal bundles were normally taken to the scaffold
and hung with the pipe and firearms when the owner died.

In summary, the above report covers the main features of the
•796 Mandan ceremonial life so far as it was possible to ascertain. In
178 evaluating the data supplied by informants, the writer gave
especial emphasis to the information of those informants whose
114 parents lived in the Nuptadi village which was occupied at
Deapolis as a separate Mandan village after the Fort Clark village
group had united with the Hidatsa. It was found that the
Mandan preserved their ceremonial structure with minor variations
after the smallpox epidemic. The clan system and age-grade
organization were simplified to meet the new conditions
of a reduced population. I have not attempted to indicate cultural
borrowing, since a companion report covering details of
the Hidatsa social and ceremonial organization is in the process
of preparation. So far as the Mandan were concerned, there is
little evidence of ceremonial borrowing since 1837, owing in
large part, no doubt, to the heavy ceremonial burden inherited
from earlier times when the population was materially larger.
That the Mandan have played an important role in the growth
of Plains culture must be inferred from their central position in
the Low Plains, the high development in trade for agricultural
products with their nomadic neighbors, and the admitted borrowing
by the Hidatsa of many significant elements of their
culture.

223 346 putting the lodge up, finishing the actual building in one day. The next day the leader put the wood pillows on the ground, dug out the fireplace, and placed the stakes at the head of the lodge where the buffalo head belonged. He finished everything up just as in the other drawings I made. After the skull was brought in by the leader, it was placed at the head of the lodge. Then we went out and cut soft grass for bedding. Iron Eyes was the man to stay in the lodge and burn incense, for he was an old man and did not go into any of the pits.

223 Each one of us went out and selected a spot where our pits should be; sometimes two would go together and make one pit. When finished, they would go to another site and make another pit for the other one. That took us two days. Where one had a pit close to a washout or bank, he would carry the dirt and throw it in there. Those on the level would carry the dirt far off and put it in a low pile to make it look as though a ground mole or pocket gopher had dug it up. After a pit was dug, we took the measurements of it for the cover and cut the six sticks for the frame. Buckbrush was tied between the pole frames to make a shield for the grass which was to come next.

The bait's place was at the west side. There were two stakes to hold it down with a crotch on the end of each. Stakes were driven into the ground, and the bait was tied to the two stakes to keep it from being moved by the birds. There was a stake on the inside of the pit in the wall also. The third stake had a crotch, and a strong cord was tied to it and to the bait so that the eagle could not move the bait.

As soon as all the stakes were tied together, to get into the pit, we would take the cover up and drop our things in under it and crawl in feet first. Before going in, the bait was fixed from the outside and the cord dropped down into the pit to be tied to the stake. Then we smoothed the grass covering. We always used six poles for the cover; that way it made the covering strong enough to hold a bird's weight. Some trappers often reported that birds came and fought the decoy if it was too close to the bait, so I always had mine farther off. That was why I never had any trouble catching birds.

223 796 When we had the lodge completed, the leader told us we could go in. We took our firearms up and stood in front of the lodge. The Leader said, "Sitting Owl, you will go in and be the Crack Shot (*mariisakihE*)."[8] He did not know that he would be selected. In fact, none of us knew who would be selected for the different places. Then Charging was told to go in, then Raven Knows Nothing, Bears Arm, and Spotted Weasel, who was selected as the waiter on that side. Then, on the other side Packs Wolf was selected waiter (*ix'-ta-ki*). Blue Stone, Little Crow, Iron Eyes, and Bad Coat went in last.

Each man beginning with the Crack Shot had four sticks, each one representing one of the four eagles, making in all twenty sticks on one side and twenty sticks on the other side. There were no markings on them; they were cut from chokecherry branches. When Wolfs Eyes went out, he had no sticks in front at all. Old Bear also gave each man four sticks which were placed in a row at the altar.

I never knew of offering strips of beaver hides to the stakes, as Crows Heart says, but it may have been in some of the other men's rites. I was out with Old Black Bear, and he was doing a little differently, but White Eagle came and asked me to go home as my folks wanted me. The leader thought

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[8] Hidatsa language.

223 796 I ought to go back, so I came away. In that trapping, I understood that there were some rules that were somewhat different. If a trapper coming home from his pit stumbles and falls, when he comes back into the lodge, he has to tell it; when he does so, a new name was given him for the time of the trapping. He also changed all their names during the time of trapping and gave them names about bears or eagles. He sold his rights to Stephen Bird, who is still living.

When everything was completed, the leader burned incense and offered smoke to the buffalo skull and offered sacrifices of calicoes to the skull. That is what we called "Blessing the Lodge." Then we went to our pits. Sitting Owl caught two white tails with black tips. In the evening we went into the lodge. The leader produced a piece of corn ball and called the Crack Shot, who, instead of crawling on his elbow and knees, stooped over and walked to the leader. He received the corn ball, and the leader said, "The Footbone is giving you this corn ball."

The Crack Shot took it and tasted it, saying "Footbone, the bottom of your foot is delicious and sweet." Each one when he came up to the leader in turn said the same thing. Each person had a piece of corn ball in front of him, and the tail feathers of the eagles were given to Crack Shot. He received them and touched the corn ball with them and passed them around until the feathers reached the leader again.

When the leader received the feathers, he again got up and went over to the buffalo skull, saying, "Old Man with Ears Backwards,[9] here are your tail feathers, but they are not yours. Your children wish you to keep these feathers."

Then the waiter went out and called, asking the women to come over to the lodge. All the women came over and sat down close to the entrance. The leader painted himself with red paint on his forehead, cheeks, hands, wrists, and the top of his head. He had a feather back of his head. He represented the Old Black Bear. His rattles were the bear's feet tied together with a long string. When the women came in, the leader and those who were sitting with him sang. The women sang with the men, and Iron Eyes'[10] wife had a little bear's skin on her lap. It was the bear that had been at the altar. When the women came in, the leader gave it to her to lay on her lap and make it dance. Each one of us took our snares from the little sticks on the altar, opened up the loops, and swung them up and down in time with the leader, who was singing a special song. The women sang, and the woman with the bear's skin made it dance in time with the music. We all enjoyed ourselves singing. At the end of each song, we would hold our cords up and pretend to be roping something.

224 223 796 Then this practice was also different from the others I was out with. Any one of the men could make a game trap by setting up posts with braces as a deadfall. The one who finds a red fox or coyote in the trap takes it out, throwing it to one side, and then takes the skin off for the altar. In case there is a boy old enough in camp, he can go out, take the animal, and bring it in. We had one boy along, but he was too young, so they did not have the trap set. They just sang the song that went with it. When the ceremony was going on, there was one song that we danced to when it came up. There was also a spe-

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[9] Ceremonial name for the buffalo.

[10] He owned a complete Mandan Eagle-trapping bundle.

224 223 796 cial song for the waiter in which he danced alone. The leader's waiter on his side was the main waiter, and the other was an assistant. If the main waiter was absent, the assistant did the work. In the evening the women would bring wood into the camp for the sweathouse.

223 796 When the wind was in the right direction, we went into the pits. That is what we called the good wind. When the wind is from the southwest or northwest, it was considered good to fair wind, but the west was considered the best. The waiter was the first one to be up and around. He would go out and look at the flag. When he saw that the wind was from the right direction, he would say, "The wind is in the right direction." The men would all get out of bed and go to their pits.

The leader would say, "I will help the waiter if he wants to go into his pit. I will stay and do his work."

When the waiter went out to see the flag and the wind was blowing from the other directions, he would come back and report it to the leader by saying, "Leader, the wind is in the wrong direction."

The leader would say to the men, "When you are through eating, go out and hunt." There was a term that they used. Instead of saying morning meal, he would say, "After you are through sitting on it," meaning that the eagle sits on the bait. That was why he used that term. He would use the words, "Go out and throw stones at animals," meaning to hunt game. When the wind was right, we went to our pits. Raven Knows Nothing caught three good eagles with black tips; then we had another meeting the same as before. The women would come, and we would have a good time. The leader would have the men come to him for their corn balls again.

Another time we went to our pits and Packs Wolf caught two with black tips, and then the leader, himself, caught two. They were black tipped also. Those were all the birds caught.

785 796 The night after the catch was made, I asked the Crack Shot (Sitting Owl, Maxoxati clan) to fill up the pipe; he did so and gave it to me. I took the pipe and gave it to the leader, saying, "My leader, take this pipe, for I wish to suffer." He was glad. Beforehand, I had prepared my sticks. I made three of them. The Crack Shot and his helper took me outside close to the lodge by a tree and there they cut my breast on both sides and on the top of my right arm. They fastened the rawhide rope to the sticks, and then I ran around the tree while the ceremony and singing was going on inside the lodge. After all the songs were sung, the same men who tortured me came out and took the rawhide rope off and pulled the sticks out. The sticks were taken in and placed on the altar. Several days after that, Charging was tortured. When I suffered, I had my medicine bundle, the Bear Medicine, that I got from my father, hanging on my right arm. When I suffered, it was like a prayer asking the great spirits to help me to live long in the world, be fortunate in everything I undertook, and have property. I prayed to Black Medicine because Spring Boy and Lodge Boy said that they would turn into that root[11] but that their spirits would go back into the skies and help the people. That was why I prayed to them. The idea of fasting and offering myself this way was so that I might be blessed by the spirits. Then in war I would come out victorious and defeat the enemy.

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[11] A piece of this root is tied to each snare.

I told you of the case where a man fasted in a bear's den, and the bear took 785
a hold of him and threw him to one side. This man dreamed that night that
the bear came and blessed him and told him that he would be a successful 796
warrior and a brave man. Afterward a son was born to him; the son was Seven Bears. The Assiniboine came with the intention of destroying our village, but Seven Bears was brave. They shot him with arrows and bullets, but they had no effect on him. His horse was shot, but he got on another and came back. He fought the enemy and ran over them; he struck them so that the enemy turned and ran back. Torturing was a part of our prayers, for, whenever one prays, he should fast. In torturing, one will have a dream of a spirit, and that way he is blessed. By doing these things, some of the men got great power from the spirits. Crows Heart once saw that Old White Man's back was full of scars, and Crows Heart asked him how many times he had suffered. Old White Man could not remember; his skin had been pierced so many times.

The next one to be tortured was Packs Wolf. His suffering was inside of the lodge, where he was fastened to the roof. His feet were off of the ground, and a stick was given to him with which to swing himself. While he was hanging there, the leader sang his songs.

Then several days after that Spotted Weasel whittled four sticks, came back, and made a sweathouse. They ran sticks through his wrist and up to the braces of the sweat lodge, and he was also tortured on the breast. When one is tortured in the sweathouse, the women are not permitted to go into it at any time. The Crack Shot was Sitting Owl, and Spotted Weasel was his son-in-law, so he got another man to act in his place. He asked Raven Knows Nothing to do the torturing. When we went in there, the leader began to pour water on the stones, and we got down low near the ground, but Spotted Weasel could not, being tied up there near the roof. He cried to the spirits; it was a hardship for him to go through, but he did. After that, we went into our pits, but no one caught any more birds, even though we were there over one month.

Now that the sweathouse was made, each one of us got some good dried meat and a whole meat [the large piece stripped off of the length of the animal's back]. We paid the leader, and he took us into the sweat lodge to cleanse all of us. We broke camp and started for home. Bluestone and I, being single, left the others and came ahead.

On the other trips with other men, they would not let the women come into 223
the lodge. I thought that the reason for being unlucky was because they had 796
let the women in.

I heard that Blue Stone's father, Wood Mouth or Medicine Bird, whipped 562
his wife one day when he was a leader and his men did not have any luck in catching the eagles. By doing that their luck changed from bad to good. They caught many eagles. I do not know if some great spirit told him to do that or not, but I do know that they ordinarily did not do that, for men, women, and children were expected to be kindhearted and not have any ill-feeling toward each other.

We did not change pipes but used both red and black stone, depending on 276
the kind the leader had. In early days they did not have the red stone pipes. 796
Then the stone was black, and the pipe was straight without the elbow. The
hole was in the end, and the stone fitted in on the inside was called I-go-xE'.

In the ceremony they used a special medicine pipe taken from the bundles.

leaned against them. We were not allowed to shoot or throw stones at any 346
kind of birds. Nor were we allowed to sing other than the songs that went with 784
the trapping. The leader tied pieces of calico to ash trees as offering to the
Holy Women and told the new members that the region back of the lodge or 223
west was holy ground as the birds came from that direction.

Then we did the "Tied" ceremony, meaning marking the corners of the 223
new pits so that they were square and deep enough to be over one's head when
sitting up in them. On the side wall a hole was dug like a small shelf and a 796 ●
stone was put in it. The stone is called Baby Stone, for the eagles were considered sacred. The stone was used as a shield, and, when one catches an eagle and wishes to kill it in the pit, instead of using the words "kill it" we said "put it to sleep" and took the stone down and placed it between the eagles wings, took the cord tied around its neck, and pulled the cord back, and that way broke the neck.

The bears were the first ones to trap eagles; there are two different stories about eagle-trapping. The leader goes in and blesses the lodge and prays to the spirits. When they first learned of eagle-trapping, the bear was doing this.
He had a cord and spread it out, opening it, and said, "All are caught." It [773]
was because the bears prayed that prayers had to be offered to the spirits to
whom the bears prayed.

There must have been a great difference in the ceremonies once, since the stone is called "Tied" and also "Sleep Stone."

When our leader saw that all was ready, he said, "We must go in." He named Little Bull to be the Crack Shot and go in first; then he named Holding Eagle to sit next to the Crack Shot; then Wolfs Eyes went in and took his place at the head of the lodge; then the helper, Big Walk, went in. Whatever the leader does in singing and praying, the man sitting next to him is expected to give him assistance. The leader and his helper are the ones to offer prayers and do the singing, while the Crack Shot and the man next to him work together too. Their duty is to torture the men. Then the other men came in on both sides and took their places. Then there were two waiters selected by the leader. They were not named, nor is anyone named until the lodge is completed and ready to move in.

No excuses are allowed. When the leader says, "I select you as a waiter," one has no right to refuse. After this, we went in and took our places. The leader said, "Waiter, burn some incense," and, while the waiter burned it, the leader took his sacred articles out and held them in the smoke. He held up the cord, and while he was singing the song to the snares he made a motion as of throwing the loop to catch something. He did that three times, and the fourth time the Crack Shot jumped up and took the snare, saying, "Leader, you have snared everything; you have roped everything north, south, west, and east," meaning that then he had everything in the world caught in his snare.

There are many songs[12] to be sung by the leader and his helper. After he sings these songs, there is a special song for the waiter, who gets up and dances with the cord, making the sign of throwing the loop to catch something. Then, one of the men who is not married would say, "Waiter, I feel someone at my back."

Then the waiter looked and said, "There is a very handsome woman back

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[12] See Frances Densmore, *Mandan and Hidatsa Music* (Bureau of American Ethnology Bull. 80 [1923]), pp. 69–80.

223 796 of you; it is an A-ci-ra′-wi′-a," meaning really a bear woman, for the origin was from the bears.

224 462 In early days when young men went out this way, the single girls would marry some of them before they left and then go out there. The women would prepare the meat from the mountain sheep and work on the hides while the men trapped. To secure these fine hides, women would marry a single man in order to get a chance to go out there.

223 796 The pits being dug, early the next morning we got up without having any breakfast and went to our pits. Some of the pits were old ones, but several new ones were made. Sometimes there would be two pits together, and then they would fix the last pit up and go into it. For their baits some had blood stored away while others had jackrabbits. Others had a hide fixed up so that it looked like some animal. Water was mixed with the dry blood and put on the bait. In the evening each man came out, and those who did not catch anything came home quietly, while those who had caught eagles would come in crying. When they heard someone come crying, the waiter would burn incense as the man with the eagle came into camp.

Eagle-trapping is called "Tied," when persons catching eagles are to kill them in the pit before bringing them to the lodge. The first man who came in that day was Little Bull. He had two birds with black tips. White Body was burning the incense. In case both the waiters were away, the leader would burn the incense himself. The next man who came in was Holding Eagle, and he had two birds with black tips. Black Bear caught two also. The saying is that, where you catch two eagles, they are a brother and a sister, for they travel together. These birds were all killed in the pit. The birds were brought in and placed at the head of the lodge in a row. The tails were brought in and placed on the buffalo head, each man keeping track of his own feathers.

223 777 The next day my brother, Little Bull, took me along, and we went into his pit. He caught four that day, and, when the fifth had landed on the bait, he told me to catch it by the feet, which I did. He helped me pull the bird down into the pit. He took me along to show me how to catch the birds. The next time he went out he caught three more, which made ten in all that he had caught. Three warbonnets could be made of them, and he had one tail extra. The leader said to him, "That is enough; you must not go out any more, or you will have bad luck." After that Little Bull did not go out any more.

223 The second time Holding Eagle went out he caught three, and the third time he caught two, so that he had seven. Black Bear caught two the first time, three the second time, and two the third time, making seven for him. Lance Owner did not have any luck in his pit, so he was advised to go into Little Bull's pit, where he caught two. Little Crow did not catch anything in his pit, so he was also told to go into Little Bull's pit, and he caught two there. Sitting Woman caught three; White Body did not catch any. Wolfs Eyes and his helper did not trap.

223 796 All these birds were killed in the pit, each trapper having a Baby Stone in his hole. While facing east, they broke the birds' necks, and in that way the spirits of the birds would return to their spirit home down the river.

There are two ways of trapping eagles. This time we followed the ceremony called "Tied" which originated with the black bear. The other way was the real eagle-trapping and in that ceremony they had ways that were different from the ceremony Wolfs Eyes used. In the other ceremony if a trapper fell down and tells the leader about it, his named is changed. This time we did not even get names when we began trapping. One morning the leader woke us and said, "There is water coming down," so we had to stop trapping. The bodies of the eagles were taken to the east side of the lodge and put on the ground. Then we all went back and ran toward the dead eagles and shot over them and then struck them. The eagles represented our enemies. That was why we had to do that. Then we broke camp and started for home. The birds had been put about two hundred yards from the medicine lodge. We cut the wings off, pulled the light feathers out, and left the bodies there. When we got back to the village the leader collected all the tails and went through a little ceremony to send the spirits of the eagles away. Sometimes they did that in the camp, but when we had to hurry, as in this case, for slush ice was forming in the river, we did it at the village. Sending the spirits away was done by making a feast and paying the leader to put on the sweat-lodge ceremony. He offered prayers to the birds and bears, asking the spirits of the birds to go away. Then he beat on a hide, and each one in the village, especially men, stood by their doors making much noise and pounding on the hide covering of the door. Then he took all those who were out trapping with him into the sweat lodge where they were cleansed by having water sprinkled on them.

[p.394 is blank]

773 171 sions of this story. None of the Caddoan Poor Boy stories have been found in the Mandan, but this may be due to the limited extent of Maximilian's collection. It can only be said that the Mandan myths so far as known seem to be about an equal mixture of north and south plains types.

535 796 CEREMONIALS: — The Mandan dance system seems to have been rather complicated, and in it are found again the two conflicting influences. In one case the origin of the dances is said to have been due to Ochkih-Hedde, the evil spirit. Again the First Chief who led them out of the ground is said to have arranged all their dances, and the Okeepa, according to Catlin, was instituted by the First Man. There were two sorts of dances; first those in which it appears that anyone could take part, and secondly those belonging to the different societies previously referred to.* Of the first kind there were four principal ones, and of these the Buffalo dance and the Scalp dance, although not the most important, were most frequently danced and were practically identical with the same dances of other plains tribes; the Scalp dance was performed by those related to persons with newly acquired coups. The Buffalo dances were of two types. One was for the purpose of getting the good will of influential men and is described by Henry and Catlin. This dance had several obscene features. The other Buffalo dance was danced by the men in relays wearing a buffalo head and its purpose was to bring the buffalo in time of need.

The other two dances deserve more particular mention. Catlin says of all these dances,[1] "Every dance has its peculiar step and song." The songs were understood only by the medicine men and required much application and study. Candidates paid to learn them. This applies particularly to the Okeepa which is the best-known dance of the Mandans. No description is necessary as Catlin has given two very full ones and Maximilian has also given a good account of it. The Okeepa was performed once a year as a rule and nearly every inhabitant of the village had some part to play in it. It lasted four days, and in all the dances, dance groups and ceremonial

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[1] Op. cit., vol. 1, p. 126.

*[Cf. pp. 129-561, cat. 116 — Analyst].

535 796 objects, they kept a careful observance of the number four and its multiples. The Okeepa appears to have been quite different from the usual sun-dance ceremonies, although the sun-dance observance formed a part of it. Catlin says that no other nation had such a dance, although many had features of it in
535 796 171 their own dances. In some respects it seems to show a rather remarkable similarity to some of the dances of the Pueblo region and very possibly some of these features were transmitted from there through the southern plains tribes. The resemblance is in small details such as the decorating of the ark with willow branches which is much like the preparation of the kisi. Communication with old villages underground was supposed to be established by pounding on the ark, as it was among the southwestern dancers by stepping on the sipapu. From the description of the sacred object in the center of the Mandan altar, it seems to have been something like the Pueblo squash blossoms. Lastly the story of the visit of the First Man to the whites and his institution of the Okeepa, after having escaped them, is much like the origin story of the Pueblo Snake and Antelope Dance. The most peculiar feature of the ceremony was the connection which it had with the flood myth; the ark was supposed to be a copy of the tower in which the Mandans were saved from the flood. It formed the center in all the different parts of the ceremony. The Okeepa had features which have been ascribed by Maximilian to the influence of early missionaries.

535 796 241 The second of these dances was the Corn Dance and this was doubtless of Caddo origin. This dance was danced to the Old Woman Who Never Dies by the old women of the village for whom a number of old men furnished the music. Each old woman carried an ear of corn on the end of a stick and the ceremony was intended to consecrate this corn. After the consecration the corn was distributed, a few grains to each family, by whom it was mixed with the seed corn for spring planting. The ceremony took place when the representatives of The Old Woman Who Never Dies — the water birds — returned north, and a quantity of dried meat was hung up on the scaffolds as a sacrifice. After the dance this dried meat

became the property of the dancers. Another corn dance was held in the fall, but Maximilian tells us that the purpose of this one was to bring the buffalo. In this dance each woman carried a whole stalk of corn—the corn was called by the name of the water bird which represented it, and a prayer was made to the Old Woman Who Never Dies through these birds. The birds going south were supposed to carry these prayers to their mistress, and in this dance each old woman made a sacrifice of some valuable article. The elements of the corn dance agree in most particulars with those of the Pawnee and southern plains tribes. 535 796 241 [171]

BURIAL:—In their burial customs the Mandans show close analogy with the Sioux. Their cemeteries were usually only two hundred to three hundred paces from the palisade and consisted of a number of scaffolds on which the dead were placed. These scaffolds were made on four posts about twelve feet high, the length of the rectangle being about six feet. Across the posts willow rods, just strong enough to support the body, were placed.[1] When a person died he was left in the village but a very short time; the face was painted red, the body was oiled, dressed in the finest clothes and wrapped in a green buffalo skin or at a later period in a piece of cloth. The whole was then tightly wrapped with thongs of rawhide from head to foot. Then other robes were soaked in water and tightly wrapped and tied around the body. After this the corpse was immediately carried out and placed on the scaffold together with a bow and quiver, shield, pipe and tobacco, knife, flint and steel and provisions for several days. In case of a child, it was wrapped up in a small bundle which was tied to the scaffold by a cloth or hide. Catlin says the bodies were placed with their feet to the rising sun. Maximilian says the face was turned to the east.[2] Lewis and Clarke[3] give an account of a different sort of burial which must have been of rare occurrence for we find no mention of anything of the sort elsewhere. It is as follows: "An old man . . . . one hundred and twenty winters old, he requested his grand Children to Dress him after Death, & Set him on a Stone on a hill, with his 764

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[1] Catlin; vol. I, p. 89.

[2] Op. cit., p. 479.

[3] Feb. 20, 1805.

4: Lowie E-5 (1910-1911) 1913

NQ17 Mandan NQ17
Hidatsa NQ14

M H 241 sown in order to enhance its fertility. The food on the rack fell to the old women's share because they represented Old-woman-who-never-dies, but frequently some members of the Dog society appeared and appropriated large portions of the meat (see p. 288).

M H 796 The autumn ceremony was celebrated in order to attract the buffalo herds. Then the women performers did not carry corncobs on sticks, but entire corn plants. Both the corn and the birds symbolizing the plants were called by the name of the female deity, and addressed in prayer as the women's mother. They were requested to pity the suppliants, to postpone a severe cold, and prevent the game from moving away lest the people should be in want of food. When the birds in question began their migration southward, or, as the Indians believed, returned to Old-woman-who-never-dies, they were supposed to take with them gifts suspended for that deity outside the village, — more particularly the dried meat, which Old-woman was believed to eat herself. Some poor women unable to make other offerings would wrap up and suspend the foot of a buffalo, but these gifts were even more acceptable to the deity than any of the others.[1]

While it is impossible to speak with assurance on this point, we can readily understand how the Goose society might have become secondarily associated with a corn ceremony when we recollect the identification of the wild geese with corn and Old-woman-who-never-dies.

M H 575 It is evident that the Goose society is of a distinctly more religious character than either the Skunk or the Enemy society. According to Buffalo-bird-woman, the Goose ceremony shared a feature with the ceremonies of two other sacred women's societies of the Mandan, viz. a final brushing-off of the performers to divest them of their sacred character (see pp. 343, 344). My informant added that there are worms in the corn and that these might have got into the performers' bodies unless they had been brushed off.

Old Women Society.

H 575 561 432 The Old Women society (kā'ru parū'wa+ĭ'ri) is said to have been an Hidatsa institution, and Buffalo-bird-woman was the only informant that described it in this connection. Though she mentioned it in the same breath with the other women's societies and explained how it helped "friendly" groups, it was clearly one of the totally different unions of people performing sacred bundle ceremonies. It seems that membership was

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[1] Maximilian, II, 182-184.

000 at least they endeavoured to obtain the portrait of the painter as an antidote. One of their
771 chiefs never smoked out of a stone pipe, but always used a wooden one. Mato-Topé never
778 partook of other people's tobacco, but always smoked by himself, with the doors shut. They
276 do not willingly show their medicines or amulets, which are usually kept wrapped up in a bundle
or bag, and never opened except on important occasions. They have particular medicine pipes,
or, as the English call them, medicine stems, which are uncovered and used for smoking only on
solemn occasions. Many make such pipes according to their own taste; such, for instance, was
the pipe of Dipauch (Plate XXI. fig. 3). The bowl was nearly in the form of a Turkish pipe,
and was made of brownish-red clay; the tube, which was rather short and thick, represented the
lord of life in human form, but which it required some stretch of the imagination to discover.
The nation preserves a celebrated pipe of this kind as a sacred relic, which no stranger is permitted
to see. It has been in their possession since remote ages, and they offered to show it to me
435 for the value of 100 dollars. The Indians cannot obtain such pipes but at a considerable expense:
439 many of the necessary ornaments are not to be procured among them, such as the upper bill
and the red crown of a species of woodpecker (*Picus pileatus*, Linn.), a bird which is not found
so high up the Missouri. For the head of one of these woodpeckers, which was brought from
597 St. Louis, they gave a large handsome buffalo robe, worth six or eight dollars. If a man possesses
● 796 such a pipe, he sometimes conceives the idea of adopting a medicine son. The young man
whom he is to choose appears to him in a dream; it is, however, requisite that he should be of a
171 good family, or have performed some exploit. He acquaints him with his intention, and, after
having provided two similar medicine pipes, he asks his newly-adopted son, whether he is ready
to undergo the ceremony of the pipes? The latter frequently answers in the affirmative, and the
time for the ceremony is fixed: but, if he has not yet made up his mind, it is deferred. The
adoptive father then chooses two young men, who practise the medicine dance together, with the two
pipes in their hands. The father often dances, in the morning, on the roof of his hut, and instructs
these two young men. When the time arrives, and the adopted son is ready for the ceremony, the
father, with all his relations, and the two young dancers, repairs to the hut of his newly-chosen
son, and brings him a present of maize, cloth, blankets, kettles, and other valuable articles. The
father takes his son by the hand and makes him sit down, after which the company dance round
him, with the two pipes; they sing, accompanied by the drum and schischikué, the two young
dancers keeping time to the music with their pipes. When the ceremony is over, and the presents
laid in one or two heaps, the relations of the medicine son bring horses, cloth, blankets, and other
things of value, which the two parties reciprocally divide between them. The father then again
takes his son by the hand, makes him rise from his seat, and dresses him in new clothes from
head to foot, and likewise paints his face according to his fancy. The dress and pipe are henceforth
his property, and he is considered as a real son, who must support and defend his father.

796

This custom exists among most of the nations on the Missouri, and even among the Esquimaux, 597
there is a somewhat similar usage. If the adopted son and father have not happened to meet 171
for a long time, they make presents to each other; the father gives the son a new dress, and
the latter presents him with a good horse. Among all the Indian nations of North America, 791
there is a particular class of men, who are specially engaged in all the above-mentioned 171
ceremonies and medicines. They are, also, the physicians, and are called, among the Mandans,
Numak-Choppenih, which signifies medicine man.

The skin of a white buffalo cow is an important article, and an eminent medicine in the 778
opinion of the Mandans and Manitaries. He who has never possessed one of them is not respected. 554
Suppose two men to be disputing about their exploits, the one an old veteran warrior, who
has slain many enemies, the other, a young lad without experience; the latter reproaches the
other with never having possessed a white buffalo cow hide, on which the old man droops his
head, and covers his face for shame. He who possesses such a hide generally offers it to the 782
lord of life, to whom he dedicates it, or, which is equivalent, to the sun, or to the first man.
He collects, perhaps, in the course of a whole twelvemonth, various articles of value, and then
hangs them up all together on a high pole in the open prairie, generally in the neighbourhood
of the burying-place, or in the village before his hut. Distinguished men and chiefs of 556
eminence are for the most part poor, because, in order to gain reputation and influence, they give 431
away everything of value which they possess. A large number of relatives is one of the chief 602
means of acquiring riches, for a young man who wishes to distinguish himself, and to be liberal,
does honour to the whole family, who assist him to the utmost of their power. When one of his
relations has anything of value, the young man goes to the owner to demand it, and not
unfrequently takes it away without ceremony. Sometimes he hangs his head in silence, and
then something of value is given him, a handsome dress, a horse, &c. If he wishes to gain
reputation and a claim to distinction, it is necessary that he should make presents. All the people
in the village notice very accurately what presents are made, and the donor has a right to display
all such presents painted on his robes, and in this manner to hand down his reputation to posterity,
as has been already related. This and military glory are, in the eyes of these men, the
greatest virtues. They dare not draw a stroke too much on their robes for the horses, guns, &c.,
which they have given away, for the young men keep a most strict account against each other,
and universal ridicule would be the immediate consequence of violating this rule. Among the 778
distinctions of any man, the white buffalo hide is the greatest. He who has not been so fortunate 281
as to kill a white buffalo himself, which is generally the case, as these animals are very rare, [439]
purchases a hide, often at a great distance from home, and other nations bring them hither, being
well aware of the great value attached to them by the Mandans. The hide must be that of a
young cow, not above two years old, and be taken off complete and tanned, with the horns,

778 nose, hoofs, and tail. The value of ten to fifteen horses is given for it. A certain Mandan gave
281 ten horses, a gun, some kettles, and other articles, for such a hide. The white hide of a bull or
[435] of an old cow is by no means so valuable. The white hide of a young cow suffices for all the
daughters of a family. They do not wear it as a robe, like the Manitaries, or, at the utmost, the
wife, or one of the daughters of the family, wears it once at some great festival, but never a second
time. The Mandans have particular ceremonies at the dedication of the hide. As soon as they
796 have obtained it they engage an eminent medicine man, who must throw it over him; he then
walks round the village in the apparent direction of the sun's course, and sings a medicine song.
When the owner, after collecting articles of value for three or four years, desires to offer his
treasure to the lord of life, or to the first man, he rolls it up, after adding some wormwood or a
head of maize, and the skin then remains suspended on a high pole till it rots away. At the
time of my visit there was such an offering at Mih-Tutta-Hang-Kush, near the stages for the dead
without the village. Sometimes, when the ceremony of dedication is finished, the hide is cut
into small strips, and the members of the family wear parts of it tied over the head, or across the
554 forehead, when they are in full dress. If a Mandan kills a young white buffalo cow, it is
accounted to him as more than an exploit, or having killed an enemy. He does not cut up the
224 animal himself, but employs another man, to whom he gives a horse for his trouble. He alone
who has killed such an animal is allowed to wear a narrow strip of the skin in his ears. The
whole robe is not ornamented, being esteemed superior to any other dress, however fine. The
[435] traders have, sometimes, sold such hides to the Indians, who gave them as many as sixty other
[136] robes in exchange. Buffalo skins with white spots are likewise highly valued by the Mandans;
but there is a race of these animals with very soft silky hair, which has a beautiful gold lustre
when in the sunshine: these are, likewise, highly prized, and sold for ten or fifteen dollars, and,
778 sometimes, for the value of a horse. Besides the white buffalo skins which are offered in sacrifice
and hung on poles, there are, in the vicinity of the villages of the Mandans and Manitaries,
other strange figures on high poles, as represented in Plate XXV. These figures are composed
of skin, grass, and twigs, which, it seems, represent the sun and moon, perhaps, also, the lord of
life, and the first man. The Indians resort to them when they wish to petition for anything,
and sometimes howl and lament for days and weeks together.

796 The Mandans have several medicine festivals, of which the Okippe, or the penitential ceremony of the ark, is by far the most remarkable. It is celebrated in the spring or summer, and I regret to say that I cannot describe it as an eye-witness. I am, however, enabled to give a circumstantial description of it, word for word, as it was communicated to me by men initiated in the mysteries of the nation.*

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* The author refers to a letter on this subject, written by Mr. Catlin, and published in a New York paper; but this is by no means so complete as that given in his valuable work published last year.—*Translator's Note.*

Numank-Machana, the first man, ordered the Numangkake to celebrate this medicine feast 796
every year. When the village has fixed the time for this festivity, they choose a man of distinction,
in whom confidence can be placed, who must put himself at the head, and direct the
solemnities. In the year 1834 Mato-Topé was chosen. He is called Kani-Sachka. This
man then causes the medicine lodge to be prepared and cleaned before the appointed time,
and wood and other necessaries to be provided.

FIRST DAY OF THE OKIPPE.—At sunset the Kani-Sachka goes into the lodge, and begins the
fast, which continues four days. With him are six men, who are to strike what is called the
tortoise, a vessel or sack made of parchment, and filled with water. Three of the men must
strike in the direction of the river downwards, and three in the direction upwards. They strike
the tortoise during the whole night. Before sunrise a man representing the Numank-Machana, 796
or the first man, arrives. He dresses himself in the medicine lodge in the following manner: 292
round his body he fastens a wolf's skin, on his head, raven's feathers, in his arms he carries the
medicine pipe, and in his robe a portion of pemmican. His face is painted red, and on the small of
the back he binds a piece of wood, to which the tail of a buffalo cow is fastened. Dressed in this
manner, he goes early in the morning of the first day of the festival, and sings on the open space
in the centre. All kinds of valuable articles, such as guns, robes, blankets, &c., are thrown towards 796
him, of which he afterwards takes possession, while on his part he distributes pemmican among the
people. He then returns to the medicine lodge, but is not at that time permitted to speak a word.
The most eminent men of the nation now come to the lodge, address the first man as their
uncle, and say, "Well, uncle, how did you fare in the villages? How did you find them?
Were you well received?" To which he replies, "Very well, nephew. I have not once lowered
my pipe to the ground." By which he means to say that he has received ample presents, and
offerings of all kinds have been hung upon his pipe. He then says, "I have seen a great many
buffaloes feeding in the prairie and drinking at the river; they are very abundant everywhere."
These were the horses; but he means to intimate that, by the medicine of this day, the buffaloes
will be attracted in great numbers. All those who intend to submit their bodies to a penance
or certain tortures, in order to render themselves acceptable to the lord of life and the first man,
come to the medicine lodge early in the morning. Their number is, of course, uncertain; sometimes
many present themselves, at other times only a few. They are smeared all over with
white clay, with no other covering besides their robes, with the hairy side outwards, and drawn
over their heads, so that the face is covered, and they are quite wrapped up in them. In the
medicine lodge they lay aside their robes. On the first day of the feast they go four times,
wrapped up as before described, and dance around the ark, which stands in the centre of the open
space. The Kani-Sachka remains during all this time moaning and leaning against the ark. All

this is done in the forenoon. In the afternoon all is silent, and neither dance nor procession takes place.

Second day of the Okippe.—On the second day, early in the morning, eight men appear, who represent buffalo bulls. They are naked, wearing only an apron of blue and white striped woollen cloth. Their body is painted black in front, with two red perpendicular stripes like the facings of a military uniform, and with several white transverse stripes looking like lace or bands. The fore arm and ankles are alternately striped white and red. In their hands they carry a fan of green willow twigs, and on their back a buffalo robe, the head of which, with the long hair on the forehead, hangs over the face. To the middle of the robe a single buffalo horn is fastened, while at the head and loins green willow branches are appended. The eight buffalo bulls put on this fantastic dress in the lodge, and, when this is done, march out two abreast in an inclined posture, extending their robes with outspread hands, and holding the willow fans upright. In this manner they dance up to the ark, where they divide, four going to the left and four to the right round the space. They again join opposite the medicine lodge, and then return as before to the ark, where they continue to dance. When they are opposite to each other they stand upright and imitate the roaring of the buffalo. As soon as this dance begins, the six tortoise strikers bring their instrument from the centre of the lodge, and place it near the ark in an easterly direction, striking it, and singing a certain song which is said to be a prayer. The Kani-Sachka stands, with his head bowed, leaning on the ark, directly opposite the tortoise, and moans without ceasing. He is quite naked except an apron of buffalo skin. His whole body is bedaubed with yellow, and on his forehead he has a wreath of bleached buffalo hair or wool hanging over the eyes. The eight buffalo bulls form a ring and dance round him, covering him with their robes; they dance in like manner to the tortoise, and next go to the door of the medicine lodge, where they make a kind of covered way with their robes, beneath which the tortoise is conveyed into the lodge. The whole ceremony is repeated eight times on this day, four times in the morning and four times in the afternoon.

Third day of the Okippe.—The same masks as yesterday dance on this day twelve times, and are prohibited from either eating or drinking. A number of other masks join them. 1, Two men, dressed like women, who dance in this costume, keeping by the side of the eight buffalo bulls. They wear clothes of bighorn leather, women's leggins (mitasses), the robes having the hair outwards. Their cheeks are painted red, their chins tattooed, and their heads adorned with glass beads, as is the custom among the women. 2. Two other men represent a couple of swans; they are naked, carry a swan's tail in their hand, are painted all over white, only the nose, mouth (representing the bill), and the lower part of the legs and feet, black. 3. A couple of rattlesnakes; the back is painted with black transverse stripes, in imitation of those

6: Wied-Neuwied T-5 (1832-1834) 1843 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

animals, the front of the body yellowish; a black line is drawn from each eye down the cheeks, 796 and in each hand they carry a bunch of wormwood. 4. One man represents the evil spirit; he is conducted by two men of the village to the river, where he is dressed and painted; his entire body is painted black, and, as soon as this is done, he is not permitted to speak a word. They put on his head a cap, with a black cock's-comb; he likewise wears a mask, with white wooden rings left for the opening round the eyes. They then make for him large teeth of cotton yarn, paint the sun upon his stomach, the crescent upon his back, and on each joint of the arms and legs, a white circle; they then put on a buffalo's tail, and place a small stick in his hand, with a ball, made of skin, at the end, to which a scalp, painted red on the under side, is fastened. The ball represents the head of an enemy. When this monster is completed, they let him loose, and he runs, like one possessed, about the prairie, comes into the village, gets upon the huts, one after the other, and prys into every corner, while the inhabitants throw out to him all kinds of valuable articles as presents. As soon as he perceives this he turns towards the sun, and intimates to it, by signs, how well he is treated, and that it is foolish of it (the sun) to keep at so great a distance. He goes about and looks on the people's heads for vermin, and, if he finds any, he pretends to be very happy, and runs about with great rapidity. The Indians are very much afraid of the devil, for which reason this part cannot be assigned to anybody; but he who wishes to perform it must offer himself. My informant added that this medicine feast was once celebrated on the 828 banks of Heart River, where the Mandans then resided, and the man who had undertaken this part was conducted into the river. When his clothes were taken off, in order to paint and dress him, he appeared very uneasy, and required to be let loose; and when this was done he seemed as one possessed by the evil spirit, and ran, with the velocity of an arrow, on the hills and about the plain. His two attendants were alarmed, and pursued him to the village, but the new demon darted past them, leaped over the high fence of the village, jumped down into the huts, and again made his egress, and then ran to the river; this now convinced them that he was possessed. It cost the inhabitants much trouble to catch and wash him, but he trembled like an aspen leaf, wrapped himself in his robe, and continued in this condition for the remainder of his life without ever speaking a word.* While the devil is walking about, the other masks continue dancing, and 796

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* When these Indians fast for three or four days together, they dream very frequently of the devil, and, in this case, 761 they believe that they have not long to live. The narrator had once fasted for a long time at this festival, and suffered himself to be hung up by the back. During the night he dreamed of the devil, who appeared far more frightful and taller than he could ever be represented. His plume of feathers reached to the clouds, and he ran about as quick as lightning. On several other occasions he dreamed of this devil, but now he is resolved not to fast any more, that he might not die prematurely. He added, that he had often looked without apprehension, and with pleasure, on the mask representing the devil; but he now regarded the matter in a different light, for, the more he thought of him, the taller and the more frightful did he appear to him, and, under these circumstances, the spirit had been very near him, and, if he had but once touched him, he certainly should have been dead already.

796 act in conformity with their parts, endeavouring to imitate the natural attitudes of the animals they represent. 5. Two men, representing white-headed eagles, are painted of a dark brown colour; the head, neck, fore arm and hands, and the lower part of the legs, are white; they carry a stick in their hands, and their business is to pursue the antelopes. 6. Are two beavers; they wear the robe with the hairy side outwards, have a piece of parchment, resembling a beaver's tail, fastened to their girdle, and are painted brown. 7. Are two birds of prey; their shoulders are blue, the breast yellowish and spotted; they have feathers on their heads, and the feet of birds of prey in their hands. 8. Are two or four bears (mato), wrapped in bears' skins, with the head and claws, which cover their head and their whole body; they generally walk in a stooping attitude about the dancers, and growl like those animals. 9. Two men represent the dried meat, which is cut in small stripe. They wear a cap of white hare skin; their body is painted with zig-zag stripes; round the waist they have a girdle of green boughs, and they dance with the others. 10. Forty or fifty Indians of different ages perform the part of antelopes; they are painted red on the back, the rest of the body and limbs are white, the nose and mouth black; they carry small sticks, and run about very swiftly. 11. Two men personate the night; they are naked, painted quite black, with white stars; on their backs they have the setting moon, and on their breast the rising sun; they are not allowed to sit, during the whole day, till the sun has set: they then sit down and must not rise till the next morning. 12. Are one or two wolves; they are painted white, wear a wolf's skin, and pursue the antelopes, which fly before them: if they catch one, the bears come and take it from them and devour it. All these animals imitate the originals to the best of their power. 13. Two prairie wolves; the tops of their heads are painted white; their faces yellowish-brown; they wear dry herbs in their hair, and carry in their hands a stick, painted with reddish-brown stripes, and run in the prairie before the other animals when they leave the village. Almost all these animals are said to have different songs, with words, [424] which the uninitiated do not understand; they sometimes practise these songs for a whole summer, and are frequently obliged to pay a high price for instruction. Originally there were only ten masks at this festival. The white-headed eagles, the beavers, and the prairie wolves, are a modern addition, and no part of the true ancient observances of it. When all these animals come together they fight with each other, and perform all sorts of antics. Every animal acts according to its natural character; the beavers strike with their tails, making a loud clapping noise; the buffaloes roll and wallow in the sand; the bears strike with their paws, &c.

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During all these masquerade dances, the penitents have remained three entire days in the medicine lodge, where they have fasted and thirsted, sitting perfectly still and quiet. On the afternoon of that day, the persons of the ten masks also meet in the medicine lodge, and all together then leave this place. The penitents lie down on their bellies, in a circle round the ark, at some distance from it; the masks dance among them and over them, to the sound of

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the schischikué. Some already begin to suffer the tortures: they give a gun, a blanket, or some other article of value, to an eminent person, to inflict the tortures on them. During this time the Kani-Sachka has been moaning, and leaning on the ark. The tortures of the penitents now begin. In many of them strips of skin and flesh are cut from the breast, or the arms, and on the back, but in such a manner that they remain fast at both ends. A strap is then passed under them, and the sufferers are thrown over the declivity of the bank, where they remain suspended in the air; others have a strap drawn through the wound, to which the head of a buffalo is fastened, and they are obliged to drag this heavy weight about; others have themselves suspended by the muscles of the back; others have joints of their fingers cut off; others, again, are lifted up by the flesh, which is cut across the stomach, or have some heavy body suspended to the muscles, which have been cut and loosened, and other similar tortures. Those who have been tortured on this day return directly to their huts; but those who can bear to fast longer do not submit themselves to the torture till the fourth day.

FOURTH DAY OF THE OKIPPE.—All those who have endured fasting for four days are now assembled in the medicine lodge. Such as feel themselves faint beg that the dancing may begin early. Accordingly, the masquerade, and the dances performed yesterday, begin at daybreak. They dance on this day sixteen times—eight times in the morning, and eight times in the afternoon. The candidates for the torture are cut about two o'clock in the afternoon; and when they have suffered to the utmost of their power, a large circle is formed; two men, who have no part in the festival, take one of the penitents between them, hold him by the hand, and the whole circle moves round with the greatest rapidity. The Kani-Sachka is likewise treated in this manner. The famished and tortured penitents, for the most part, soon fall down, and many faint away, but no regard is paid to this; they are dragged and pulled about as long as they can possibly bear it; they are then let loose, and remain stretched on the ground as if dead. The eight buffalo bulls now come forward to execute their last dance. Meantime, Numank-Machana (the first man) stands on one side of the place, and invites the inhabitants to assemble. The men come on foot and on horseback, with their bows and arrows: the arrows are adorned with green leaves at the wooden points; and, when the eight buffaloes have approached, dancing, the first man, and been repulsed by him, they are shot at from all sides, fall, roll on the ground, and then lie still as if dead. The first man then invites the inhabitants to take the flesh of the buffaloes. The latter, whose robes have already fallen off, rise, and retire into the medicine lodge. Then the dancers divide into two parties, extend their arms and legs, strike themselves on the stomach, exclaiming that they feel themselves strong; some, that they will kill enemies; others, that they will slay many buffaloes, &c. They then retire, take food, and rest themselves, and the festival is concluded.

The wounds that have been inflicted on this occasion are now healed, but they remain visible

● 796 during the whole life, like thick swollen weals. This is to be observed in a much higher degree
785 among the Manitaries than among the Mandans; the former seem to submit to much more severe
304 tortures. The buffalo skulls, which these Indians have dragged about with much pain, are preserved in their huts, where they are everywhere to be seen, to be handed down from the father to the children. Many such heads are looked upon by them as medicine; they are kept in the huts, and sometimes the Indians stroke them over the nose, and set food before them. In general, the buffalo is a medicine animal, and more or less sacred.

796 Another very remarkable medicine festival is that for attracting the herds of buffaloes, which
is usually celebrated in the autumn, or winter. I shall describe this festival, as an eye-witness
837 among the Manitaries, where it is observed precisely in the same manner as among the Mandans. At this festival they leave their wives to the older men, and individual Indians do the same on certain occasions, when they desire to ask good wishes for the attainment of some object they have in view. A man, in such a case, goes, with his pipe, and accompanied by his wife, who wears no clothes except her buffalo robe, to another hut. The wife carries a dish of boiled maize, which she sets down before a third person, and the man does the same with his pipe. The woman then passes the palm of her hand down the whole arm of the person favoured in this manner, takes him by the hand, and he must follow her to a retired spot, generally to the forest surrounding the huts in the winter time; after which she returns and repeats the same process, often with eight or ten men. As soon as the man so favoured has resumed his seat, the person who asks his good wishes presents his pipe to him that he may smoke; whereupon he expresses his best wishes for the success of the undertaking or project in hand. By way of returning thanks, his arm is again stroked.

796 A third medicine feast is that described by Say, by the name of the corn dance of the
773 Manitaries. He is pretty correct in his account of it, and it is used as well among the Mandans as the Manitaries. It is a consecration of the grain to be sown, and is called the corn dance feast of the women. The old woman who never dies sends, in the spring, the water-fowl, swans, geese, and ducks, as symbols of the kinds of grain cultivated by the Indians. The wild goose signifies maize; the swan, the gourd; and the duck, beans. It is the old woman that causes these plants to grow, and, therefore, she sends these birds as her signs and representatives. It is very seldom that eleven wild geese are found together in the spring; but, if it happens, this is a sign that the crop of maize will be remarkably fine. The Indians keep a large quantity of dried flesh in readiness for the time in the spring when the birds arrive, that they may immediately celebrate the corn feast of the women. They hang the meat, before the village, on long stages made of poles, three or four rows, one above another, and this, with various articles of value, is considered as an offering to the old woman. The elderly females, as representatives of the old woman who never dies, assemble on a certain day about the stages, carrying a stick in their hands, to one

end of which a head of maize is fastened. Sitting down in a circle, they plant their sticks in the ground before them, and then dance round the stages. Some old men beat the drum, and rattle the schischikué. The maize is not wetted or sprinkled, as many believe, but, on the contrary, it is supposed that such a practice would be injurious. While the old women are performing these ceremonies, the younger ones come and put some dry pulverized meat into their mouths, for which each of them receives, in return, a grain of the consecrated maize, which she eats. Three or four grains are put into their dish, and are afterwards carefully mixed with the seed to be sown, in order to make it thrive and yield an abundant crop. The dried flesh on the stages is the perquisite of the aged females, as the representatives of the old woman who never dies. During the ceremony, it is not unusual for some men of the band of dogs to come and pull a large piece of flesh from the poles, and carry it off. As members of this band, and being men of distinction, no opposition can be offered. 796 773

A similar corn feast is repeated in the autumn, but at that season it is held for the purpose of attracting the herds of buffaloes, and of obtaining a large supply of meat. Each woman then has not a stick with a head of maize, as in the former instance, but a whole plant of that grain, pulled up by the roots. They designate the maize as well as the birds, which are the symbols of the fruits of the earth, by the name of the old woman who never dies, and call upon them in the autumn, saying—"Mother, have pity on us; do not send the severe cold too soon, so that we may have a sufficient supply of meat; do not permit all the game to go away, so that we may have something for the winter."

In autumn, when the birds emigrate to the south, or, as the Indians express it, return to the old woman, they believe that they take with them the presents—especially the dried flesh—that were hung up at the entrance of the village, for the giver and protectress of the crop. They further imagine that the old woman partakes of the flesh. Some poor females among these Indians, who are not able to offer flesh or any valuable gift, take a piece of parchment, in which they wrap the foot of a buffalo, and suspend it to one of the poles as their offering. The birds on their return, go to the old woman, each bringing something from the Indians; but, towards the end, one approaches, and says—"I have very little to give you, for I have received only a very mean gift." To this, the old woman, on receiving the buffalo's foot from the poor women, or widows, says—"This is just what I love; this poor offering is more dear to me than all the other presents, however costly." Upon this she boils a piece of the foot with some maize, and eats it with much satisfaction.

The old woman who never dies has very extensive plantations of maize, the keepers of 773
which are the great stag and the white-tailed stag. She has, likewise, many blackbirds, which help to guard her property. When she intends to feed these keepers, she summons them, and they fall with avidity upon the maize fields. As these plantations are very large, she requires many

7: Catlin R, E-5 (1832-1840) 1857
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LETTER—No. 15.

MANDAN VILLAGE, UPPER MISSOURI.

A WEEK or more has elapsed since the date of my last Letter, and nothing as yet of the great and curious event—or the *Mandan religious ceremony*. There is evidently much preparation making for it, however; and from what I can learn, no one in the nation, save the *medicine-men*, have any knowledge of the exact day on which it is to commence. I am informed by the chiefs, that it takes place as soon as the willow-tree is in full leaf; for, say they, "the twig which the bird brought in was a willow bough, and had full-grown leaves on it." So it seems that this celebration has some relation to the Flood. 796

This great occasion is close at hand, and will, undoubtedly, commence in a few days; in the meantime I will give a few notes and memorandums, which I have made since my last. 080

I have been continually at work with my brush, with fine and picturesque subjects before me; and from the strange, whimsical, and superstitious notions which they have of an art so novel and unaccountable to them, I have been initiated into many of their mysteries—have witnessed many very curious incidents, and preserved several anecdotes, some of which I must relate.

Perhaps nothing ever more completely astonished these people than the operations of my *brush*. The art of portrait-painting was a subject entirely new to them, and of course, unthought of; and my appearance here has commenced a new era in the arcana of *medicine* or mystery. Soon after arriving here, I commenced and finished the portraits of the two principal chiefs. This was done without having awakened the curiosity of the villagers, as they had heard nothing of what was going on, and even the chiefs themselves seemed to be ignorant of my designs, until the pictures were completed. No one else was admitted into my lodge during the operation; and when finished, it was exceedingly amusing to see them mutually recognizing each other's likeness, and assuring each other of the striking resemblance which they bore to the originals. Both of these pressed their hand over their mouths awhile in dead silence (a custom amongst most tribes, when anything surprises them very much); looking attentively upon the portraits and myself, and upon the palette and colours with which these unaccountable effects had been produced. 123

536 525 stake their liberty upon the issue of these games, offering themselves as slaves to their opponents in case they get beaten.

796 *Feasting* and *fasting* are important customs observed by the Mandans, as well as by most other tribes, at stated times and for particular purposes. These observances are strictly religious and rigidly observed. There are many of these forms practiced amongst the Mandans, some of which are exceedingly interesting, and important also, in forming a correct estimate of the Indian character; and I shall at a future period take particular pains to lay them before my readers.

782 *Sacrificing* is also a religious custom with these people, and is performed in many different modes, and on numerous occasions. Of this custom I shall also speak more fully hereafter, merely noticing at present, some few of the hundred modes in which these offerings are made to the Good and Evil Spirits. Human sacrifices have never been made by the Mandans, nor by any of the north western tribes (so far as I can learn), excepting the Pawnees of the Platte; who have, undoubtedly, observed such an inhuman practice in former times, though they have relinquished it of late. The Mandans sacrifice their fingers to the Great Spirit, and of their worldly goods, the best and the most costly; if a horse or a dog, it must be the favourite one; if it is an arrow from their quiver, they will select the most perfect one as the most effective gift; if it is meat, it is the choicest piece cut from the buffalo or other animal; if it is anything from the stores of the Traders, it is the most costly—it is blue or scarlet cloth, which costs them in this country an enormous price, and is chiefly used for the purpose of hanging over their wigwams to decay, or to cover the scaffolds where rest the bones of their departed relations.

Of these kinds of sacrifices there are three of an interesting nature, erected over the great medicine-lodge in the centre of the village—they consist of ten or fifteen yards of blue and black cloth each, purchased from the Fur Company at fifteen or twenty dollars per yard, which are folded up so as to resemble human figures, with quills in their heads and masks on their faces. These singular-looking figures, like "*scare crows*" (PLATE 47), are erected on poles about thirty feet high, over the door of the mystery-lodge, and there are left to decay. There hangs now by the side of them another, which was added to the number a few days since, of the skin of a white buffalo, which will remain there until it decays and falls to pieces.

782 439 This beautiful and costly skin, when its history is known, will furnish a striking proof of the importance which they attach to these propitiatory offerings. But a few weeks since, a party of Mandans returned from the Mouth of the Yellow Stone, two hundred miles above, with information that a party of Blackfeet were visiting that place on business with the American Fur Company; and that they had with them a white buffalo robe for sale. This was looked upon as a subject of great importance by the chiefs, and one worthy of public consideration. A white buffalo robe is a

LETTER—No. 22.

MANDAN VILLAGE, *UPPER MISSOURI.*

OH! "*horribile visu—et mirabile dictu!*" Thank God, it is over, that I have seen it, and am able to tell it to the world. 000

The *annual religious ceremony*, of four days, of which I have so often spoken, and which I have so long been wishing to see, has at last been enacted in this village; and I have, fortunately, been able to see and to understand it in most of its bearings, which was more than I had reason to expect; for no white man, in all probability, has ever been before admitted to the *medicine-lodge* during these most remarkable and appalling scenes. 796

Well and truly has it been said, that the Mandans are a strange and peculiar people; and most correctly had I been informed, that this was an important and interesting scene, by those who had, on former occasions, witnessed such parts of it as are transacted out of doors, and in front of the *medicine-lodge*.

Since the date of my last Letter, I was lucky enough to have painted the *medicine-man*, who was high-priest on this grand occasion, or conductor of the ceremonies, who had me regularly installed doctor or "*medicine;*" and who, on the morning when these grand refinements in mysteries commenced, took me by the arm, and led me into the *medicine-lodge*, where the Fur Trader, Mr. Kipp, and his two clerks accompanied me in close attendance for four days; all of us going to our own quarters at sun-down, and returning again at sun-rise the next morning.

I took my sketch-book with me, and have made many and faithful drawings of what we saw, and full notes of everything as translated to me by the interpreter; and since the close of that horrid and frightful scen which was a week ago or more, I have been closely ensconced in an eart covered wigwam, with a fine sky-light over my head, with my palette ar brushes, endeavouring faithfully to put the whole of what we saw upo canvass, which my companions all agree to be critically correct, and of tl fidelity of which they have attached their certificates to the backs of tl paintings. I have made four paintings of these strange scenes, containin several hundred figures, representing the transactions of each day; and if live to get them home, they will be found to be exceedingly curious and interesting.

I shudder at the relation, or even at the thought of these barbarous and 000

These people living in a climate where they suffer from cold in the severity 771
of their winters, have very naturally reversed our ideas of Heaven and Hell. The latter they describe to be a country very far to the north, of barren and hideous aspect, and covered with eternal snows and ice. The torments of this freezing place they describe as most excruciating; whilst Heaven they suppose to be in a warmer and delightful latitude, where nothing is felt but the keenest enjoyment, and where the country abounds in buffaloes and other luxuries of life. The Great or Good Spirit they believe dwells in the former place for the purpose of there meeting those who have offended him; increasing the agony of their sufferings, by being himself present, administering the penalties. The Bad or Evil Spirit they at the same time suppose to reside in Paradise, still tempting the happy; and those who have gone to the regions of punishment they believe to be tortured for a time proportioned to the amount of their transgressions, and that they are then to be transferred to the land of the happy, where they are again liable to the temptations of the Evil Spirit, and answerable again at a future period for their new offences.

Such is the religious creed of the Mandans, and for the purpose of appeasing the Good and Evil Spirits, and to secure their entrance into those "fields Elysian," or beautiful hunting grounds, do the young men subject themselves to the horrid and sickening cruelties to be described in the following pages.

There are other three distinct objects (yet to be named) for which these 796
religious ceremonies are held, which are as follow:—

First, they are held annually as a celebration of the event of the subsiding of the Flood, which they call *Mee-nee-ro-ka-ha-sha*, (sinking down or settling of the waters.)

Secondly, for the purpose of dancing what they call, *Bel-lohck-na-pic* (the bull-dance); to the strict observance of which they attribute the coming of buffaloes to supply them with food during the season; and

Thirdly and lastly, for the purpose of conducting all the young men of 796
the tribe, as they annually arrive to the age of manhood, through an ordeal 881
of privation and torture, which, while it is supposed to harden their muscles and prepare them for extreme endurance, enables the chiefs who are spectators to the scene, to decide upon their comparative bodily strength and ability to endure the extreme privations and sufferings that often fall to the lots of Indian warriors; and that they may decide who is the most hardy and best able to lead a war-party in case of extreme exigency.

This part of the ceremony, as I have just witnessed it, is truly shocking 000
to behold, and will almost stagger the belief of the world when they read o it. The scene is too terrible and too revolting to be seen or to be told, were it not an essential part of a whole, which will be new to the civilized world, and therefore worth their knowing.

The bull-dance, and many other parts of these ceremonies are exceed-

300 ingly grotesque and amusing, and that part of them which has a relation to the Deluge is harmless and full of interest.

361 In the centre of the Mandan village is an open, circular area of 150 feet diameter, kept always clear, as a public ground, for the display of all their public feasts, parades, &c. and around it are their wigwams placed as near to each other as they can well stand, their doors facing the centre of this public area.

778 796 In the middle of this ground, which is trodden like a hard pavement, is a curb (somewhat like a large hogshead standing on its end) made of planks (and bound with hoops), some eight or nine feet high, which they religiously preserve and protect from year to year, free from mark or scratch, and which they call the "big canoe"—it is undoubtedly a symbolic representation of a part of their traditional history of the Flood; which it is very evident, from this and numerous other features of this grand ceremony, they have in some way or other received, and are here endeavouring to perpetuate by vividly impressing it on the minds of the whole nation. This object of superstition, from its position, as the very centre of the village is the rallying point of the whole nation. To it their devotions are paid on various occasions of feasts and religious exercises during the year; and in this extraordinary scene it was often the nucleus of their mysteries and cruelties, as I shall shortly describe them, and becomes an object worth bearing in mind, and worthy of being understood.

796 805 773 This exciting and appalling scene, then, which is familiarly (and no doubt correctly) called the "Mandan religious ceremony," commences, not on a particular day of the year, (for these people keep no record of days or weeks), but at a particular season, which is designated by the full expansion of the willow leaves under the bank of the river; for according to their tradition, "the twig that the bird brought home was a willow bough, and had full-grown leaves on it," and the bird to which they allude, is the mourning or turtle-dove, which they took great pains to point out to me, as it is often to be seen feeding on the sides of their earth-covered lodges, and which, being, as they call it, a *medicine-bird*, is not to be destroyed or harmed by any one, and even their dogs are instructed not to do it injury.

796 On the morning on which this strange transaction commenced, I was sitting at breakfast in the house of the Trader, Mr. Kipp, when at sun-rise, we were suddenly startled by the shrieking and screaming of the women, and barking and howling of dogs, as if an enemy were actually storming their village.

"Now we have it!" (exclaimed *mine host*, as he sprang from the table,) the grand ceremony has commenced!—drop your knife and fork, Monsr. and get your sketch-book as soon as possible, that you may lose nothing, for the very moment of *commencing* is as curious as anything else of this strange affair." I seized my sketch-book, and all hands of us were in an instant in front of the medicine-lodge, ready to see and to hear all that was to take place. Groups of women and children were gathered on the tops of

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their earth-covered wigwams, and all were screaming, and dogs were howling, and all eyes directed to the prairies in the West, where was beheld at a mile distant, a solitary individual descending a prairie bluff, and making his way in a direct line towards the village!

The whole community joined in the general expression of great alarm, as if they were in danger of instant destruction; bows were strung and thrumed to test their elasticity—their horses were caught upon the prairie and run into the village—warriors were blackening their faces, and dogs were muzzled, and every preparation made, as if for instant combat

During this deafening din and confusion within the piquets of the village of the Mandans, the figure discovered on the prairie continued to approach with a dignified step and in a right line towards the village; all eyes were upon him, and he at length made his appearance (without opposition) within the piquets, and proceeded towards the centre of the village, where all the chiefs and braves stood ready to receive him, which they did in a cordial manner, by shaking hands with him, recognizing him as an old acquaintance, and pronouncing his name *Nu-mohk-muck-a-nah* (the first or only man). The body of this strange personage, which was chiefly naked, was painted with white clay, so as to resemble at a little distance, a white man; he wore a robe of four white wolf skins falling back over his shoulders; on his head he had a splendid head-dress made of two ravens' skins, and in his left hand he cautiously carried a large pipe, which he seemed to watch and guard as something of great importance. After passing the chiefs and braves as described, he approached the *medicine* or mystery lodge, which he had the means of opening, and which had been religiously closed during the year except for the performance of these religious rites.

Having opened and entered it, he called in four men whom he appointed to clean it out, and put it in readiness for the ceremonies, by sweeping it and strewing a profusion of green willow-boughs over its floor, and with them decorating its sides. Wild sage also, and many other aromatic herbs they gathered from the prairies, and scattered over its floor; and over these were arranged a curious group of buffalo and human skulls, and other articles, which were to be used during this strange and unaccountable transaction.

During the whole of this day, and while these preparations were making in the *medicine-lodge*, Nu-mohk-muck-a-nah (the first or only man) travelled through the village, stopping in front of every man's lodge, and crying until the owner of the lodge came out, and asked who he was, and what was the matter? to which he replied by relating the sad catastrophe which had happened on the earth's surface by the overflowing of the waters, saying that "he was the only person saved from the universal calamity: that he landed his big canoe on a high mountain in the west, where he now resides; that he had come to open the *medicine-lodge*, which must needs receive a present of some edged-tool from the owner of every wigwam, that

•796 it may be sacrificed to the water; for he says, "if this is not done, there will be another flood, and no one will be saved, as it was with such tools that the big canoe was made."

Having visited every lodge or wigwam in the village, during the day, and having received such a present at each, as a hatchet, a knife, &c. (which is undoubtedly always prepared and ready for the occasion), he returned at evening and deposited them in the *medicine-lodge*, where they remained until the afternoon of the last day of the ceremony, when, as the final or closing scene, they were thrown into the river in a deep place, from a bank thirty feet high, and in presence of the whole village; from whence they can never be recovered, and where they were, undoubtedly, *sacrificed* to the Spirit of the Water.

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During the first night of this strange character in the village, no one could tell where he slept; and every person, both old and young, and dogs, and all living things were kept within doors, and dead silence reigned every where. On the next morning at sunrise, however, he made his appearance again, and entered the *medicine-lodge;* and at his heels (in "*Indian file*," *i. e.* single file, one following in another's tracks) all the young men who were candidates for the self-tortures which were to be inflicted, and for the honours that were to be bestowed by the chiefs on those who could most manfully endure them. There were on this occasion about fifty young men who entered the lists, and as they went into the sacred lodge, each one's body was chiefly naked, and covered with clay of different colours; some were red, others were yellow, and some were covered with white clay, giving them the appearance of white men. Each one of them carried in his right hand his *medicine-bag*—on his left arm, his shield of the bull's hide—in his left hand, his bow and arrows, with his quiver slung on his back.

When all had entered the lodge, they placed themselves in reclining postures around its sides, and each one had suspended over his head his respective weapons and *medicine*, presenting altogether, one of the most wild and picturesque scenes imaginable.

Nu-mohk-muck-a-nah (the first or only man) was in the midst of them, and having lit and smoked his medicine-pipe for their success; and having addressed them in a short speech, stimulating and encouraging them to trust to the Great Spirit for His protection during the severe ordeal they were about to pass through; he called into the lodge an old medicine or mystery-man, whose body was painted yellow, and whom he appointed master of ceremonies during this occasion, whom they denominated in their language *O-kee-pah Ka-se-kah* (keeper or conductor of the ceremonies). He was appointed, and the authority passed by the presentation of the medicine-pipe, on which they consider hangs all the power of holding and conducting all these rites.

After this delegated authority had thus passed over to the medicine-man; Nu-mohk-muck-a-nah shook hands with him, and bade him good

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bye, saying "that he was going back to the mountains in the west, from whence he should assuredly return in just a year from that time, to open the lodge again." He then went out of the lodge, and passing through the village, took formal leave of the chiefs in the same manner, and soon disappeared over the bluffs from whence he came. No more was seen of this surprising character during the occasion; but I shall have something yet to say of him and his strange office before I get through the Letter.

To return to the lodge,—the medicine or mystery-man just appointed, and who had received his injunctions from Nu-mohk-muck-a-nah, was left sole conductor and keeper; and according to those injunctions, it was his duty to lie by a small fire in the centre of the lodge, with his medicine-pipe in his hand, crying to the Great Spirit incessantly, watching the young men, and preventing entirely their escape from the lodge, and all communication whatever with people outside, for the space of four days and nights, during which time they were not allowed to *eat*, to *drink*, or to *sleep*, preparatory to the excruciating self-tortures which they were to endure on the fourth day.

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I mentioned that I had made four paintings of these strange scenes, and the first one exhibits the interior of the medicine-lodge at this moment; with the young men all reclining around its sides, and the conductor or mystery-man lying by the fire, crying to the Great Spirit (PLATE 66). It was just at this juncture that I was ushered into this sacred temple of their worship, with my companions, which was, undoubtedly, the first time that their devotions had ever been trespassed upon by the presence of pale faces; and in this instance had been brought about in the following strange and unexpected manner.

I had most luckily for myself, painted a full-length portrait of this great magician or high-priest, but a day previous to the commencement of the ceremonies (in which I had represented him in the performance of some of his mysteries), with which he had been so exceedingly pleased as well as astonished (as "he could see its eyes move"), that I must needs be, in his opinion, deeply skilled in magic and mysteries, and well-entitled to a respectable rank in the craft, to which I had been at once elevated by the unanimous voice of the doctors, and regularly initiated, and styled *Te-ho-pee-nee-wash-ee-waska-pooska*, the *white medicine* (or Spirit) *painter*.

With this very honourable degree which had just been conferred upon me, I was standing in front of the medicine-lodge early in the morning, with my companions by my side, endeavouring to get a peep, if possible, into its sacred interior; when this *master of ceremonies*, guarding and conducting its secrets, as I before described, came out of the door and taking me with a firm *professional* affection by the arm, led me into this *sanctum sanctorum*, which was strictly guarded from, even a peep or a gaze from the vulgar, by a vestibule of eight or ten feet in length, guarded with a double screen or door, and two or three dark and frowning centinels with spears

7: Catlin R, E-5 (1832-1840) 1857
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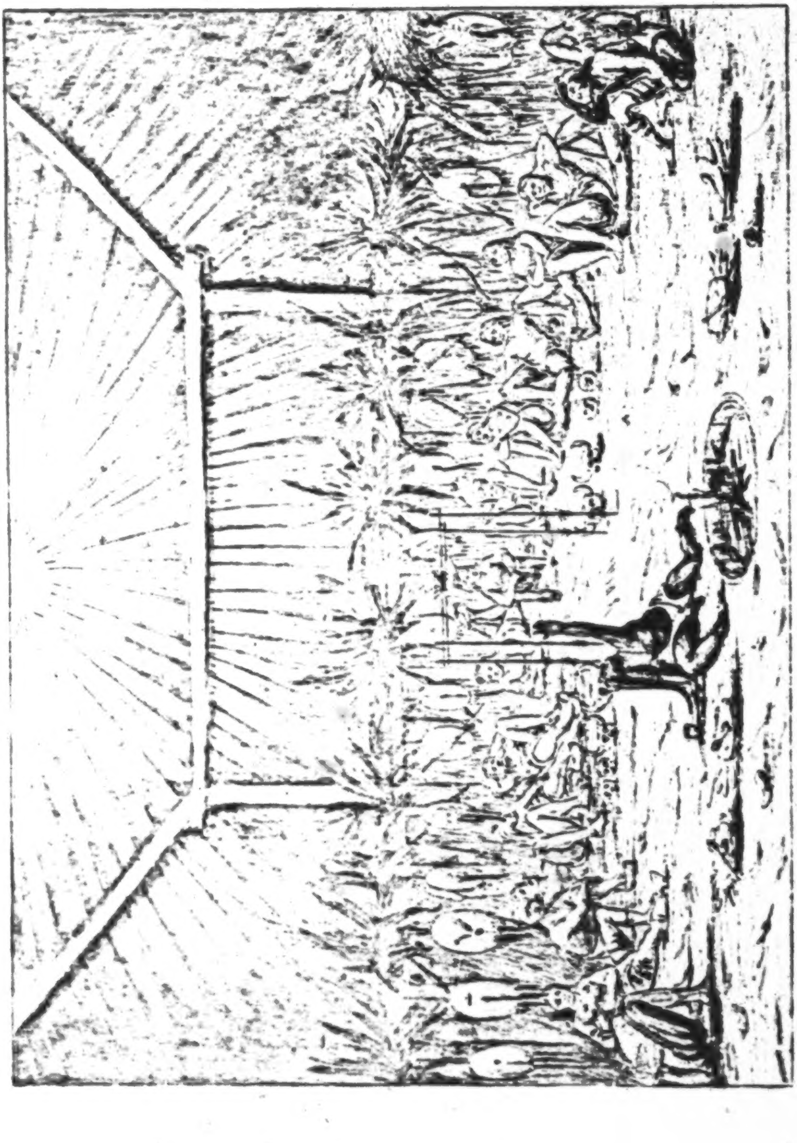

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[facing p. 161

or war-clubs in their hands. I gave the wink to my companions as I was 796 passing in, and the potency of my *medicine* was such as to gain them a quiet 123 admission, and all of us were comfortably placed on elevated seats, which our conductor soon prepared for us.

We were then in full view of everything that transpired in the lodge, having before us the scene exactly, which is represented in the first of the four pictures. To this seat we returned every morning at sunrise, and remained until sun-down for four days, the whole time which these strange scenes occupied.

In addition to the preparations and arrangements of the interior of this 796 sanctuary, as above described, there was a curious, though a very strict 778 arrangement of buffalo and human skulls placed on the floor of the lodge, and between them (which were divided into two parcels), and in front of the reclining group of young candidates, was a small and very delicate scaffold, elevated about five feet from the ground, made of four posts or crotches, not larger than a gun-rod, and placed some four or five feet apart, supporting four equally delicate rods, resting in the crotches; thus forming the frame of the scaffold, which was completed by a number of still smaller and more delicate sticks, transversely resting upon them. On the centre of this little frame rested some small object, which I could not exactly understand from the distance of twenty or thirty feet which intervened between it and my eye. I started several times from my seat to approach it, but all eyes were instantly upon me, and every mouth in the assembly sent forth a hush—sh—! which brought me back to my seat again; and I at length quieted my stifled curiosity as well as I could, upon learning the fact, that so sacred was that object, and so important its secrets or mysteries, that not *I* alone, but even the young men, who were passing the ordeal, and all the village, save the conductor of the mysteries, were stopped from approaching it, or knowing what it was.

This little mystery-thing, whatever it was, had the appearance from where I sat, of a small tortoise or frog lying on its back, with its head and legs quite extended, and wound and tasselled off with exceedingly delicate red and blue, and yellow ribbons or tassels, and other bright coloured ornaments; and seemed, from the devotions paid to it, to be the very nucleus of their mysteries—the *sanctissimus sanctorum*, from which seemed to emanate all the sanctity of their proceedings, and to which, all seemed to be paying the highest devotional respect.

This strange, yet important *essence* of their mysteries, I made every enquiry about; but got no further information of, than what I could learn by my eyes, at the distance at which I saw it, and from the silent respect which I saw paid to it. I tried with the doctors, and all of the *fraternity* answered me, that that was "*great medicine*," assuring me that it "could not be told." So I quieted my curiosity as well as I could, by the full conviction that I had a *degree* or two yet to take before I could fathom all

the arcana of Indian superstitions; and that this little, seemingly wonderful, 796
relic of antiquity, symbol of some grand event, or "secret too valuable to 778
be told," might have been at last nothing but a silly bunch of strings and toys, to which they pay some great peculiar regard; giving thereby to some favourite Spirit or essence an ideal existence, and which, when called upon to describe, they refuse to do so, calling it "*Great Medicine*," for the very reason that there is nothing in it to reveal or describe.

Immediately under the little frame or scaffold described, and on the floor of the lodge was placed a knife, and by the side of it a bundle of splints or skewers, which were kept in readiness for the infliction of the cruelties directly to be explained. There were seen also, in this stage of the affair, a number of cords of rawhide hanging down from the top of the lodge, and passing through its roof, with which the young men were to be suspended by the splints passed through their flesh, and drawn up by men placed on the top of the lodge for the purpose, as will be described in a few moments.

There were also four articles of great veneration and importance lying on the floor of the lodge, which were sacks, containing in each some three or four gallons of water. These also were objects of superstitious regard, and made with great labour and much ingenuity; each one of them being constructed of the skin of the buffalo's neck, and most elaborately sewed together in the form of a large tortoise lying on its back, with a bunch of eagle's quills appended to it as a tail; and each of them having a stick, shaped like a drum-stick, lying on them, with which, in a subsequent stage of these ceremonies, as will be seen, they are beaten upon by several of their mystery-men, as a part of the music for their strange dances and mysteries. By the side of these sacks which they call *Eeh-teeh-ka*, are two other articles of equal importance, which they call *Eeh-na-dee* (rattles), in the form of a gourd-shell made also of dried skins, and used at the same time as the others, in the music (or rather *noise* and *din*) for their dances, &c.

These four sacks of water have the appearance of very great antiquity; and by enquiring of my very ingenious friend and patron, the *medicine-man*, after the ceremonies were over, he very gravely told me, that "those four tortoises contained the waters from the four quarters of the world—that these waters had been contained therein ever since the settling down of the waters!" I did not think it best to advance any argument against so ridiculous a theory, and therefore could not even enquire or learn, at what period they had been instituted, or how often, or on what occasions, the water in them had been changed or replenished.

I made several propositions, through my friend Mr. Kipp, the trader and 796
interpreter, to purchase one of these strange things by offering them a very 421
liberal price; to which I received in answer that these, and all the very numerous articles used in these ceremonies, being a *society property* were

796 421 *medicine*, and could not be sold for any consideration; so I abandoned all thoughts of obtaining anything, except what I have done by the *medicine* operation of my pencil, which was applied to everything, and even upon that they looked with decided distrust and apprehension, as a sort of theft or sacrilege.

796 Such then was the group, and such the appearance of the interior of the medicine-lodge during the three first, and part of the fourth day also, of the Mandan religious ceremonies. The medicine-man with a group about him, of young aspirants who were under his sole controul, as was every article and implement to be used, and the sanctity of this solitary and gloomy looking place, which could not be trespassed upon by any man's presence without his most sovereign permission.

796 535 During the three first days of this solemn conclave, there were many very curious forms and amusements enacted in the open area in the middle of the village, and in front of the medicine-lodge, by other members of the community, one of which formed a material part or link of these strange ceremonials. This very curious and exceedingly grotesque part of their performance, which they denominated *Bel-lohck nah-pick* (the bull-dance) of which I have before spoken, as one of the avowed objects for which they held this annual fête; and to the strictest observance of which they attribute the coming of buffaloes to supply them with food during the season—is repeated four times during the first day, eight times on the second day, twelve times on the third day, and sixteen times on the fourth day; and always around the curb, or "*big canoe*," of which I have before spoken.

This subject I have selected for my second picture, and the principal actors in it were eight men, with the entire skins of buffaloes thrown over their backs, with the horns and hoofs and tails remaining on; their bodies in a horizontal position, enabling them to imitate the actions of the buffalo, whilst they were looking out of its eyes as through a mask (PLATE 67).

The bodies of these men were chiefly naked and all painted in the most extraordinary manner, with the nicest adherence to exact similarity; their limbs, bodies and faces, being in every part covered, either with black, red, or white paint. Each one of these strange characters had also a lock of buffalo's hair tied around his ancles—in his right hand a rattle, and a slender white rod or staff, six feet long, in the other; and carried on his back, a bunch of green willow boughs about the usual size of a bundle of straw. These eight men, being divided into four pairs, took their positions on the four different sides of the curb or big canoe, representing thereby the four cardinal points; and between each group of them, with the back turned to the big canoe, was another figure, engaged in the same dance, keeping step with them, with a similar staff or wand in one hand and a rattle in the other, and (being four in number) answering again to the four cardinal points. The bodies of these four young men were chiefly naked, with no other dress upon them than a beautiful kelt (or quartz-quaw), around the waist, made of eagles

7: Catlin R, E-5 (1832-1840) 1857
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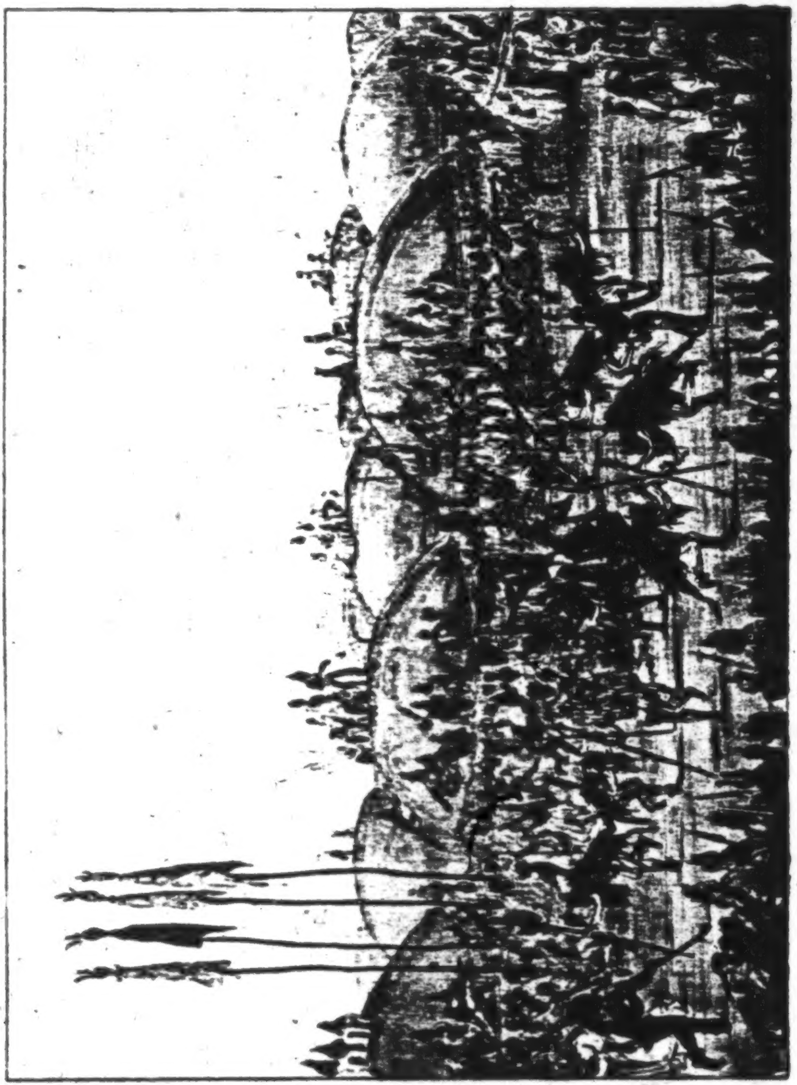

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796 quills and ermine, and very splendid head-dresses made of the same materials. 535 Two of these figures were painted entirely black with pounded charcoal and grease, whom they called the "firmament or night," and the numerous white spots which were dotted all over their bodies, they called "stars." The other two were painted from head to foot as red as vermilion could make them; these they said represented the day, and the white streaks which were painted up and down over their bodies, were "ghosts which the morning rays were chasing away."

These twelve are the only persons actually engaged in this strange dance, which is each time repeated in the same form, without the slightest variation. There are, however, a great number of characters engaged in giving the whole effect and wildness to this strange and laughable scene, each one acting well his part, and whose offices, strange and inexplicable as they are, I will endeavour to point out and explain as well as I can, from what I saw, elucidated by their own descriptions.

This most remarkable scene, then, which is witnessed more or less often on each day, takes place in presence of the whole nation, who are generally gathered around, on the tops of the wigwams or otherwise, as spectators, whilst the young men are reclining and fasting in the lodge as above described. On the first day, this "*bull-dance*" is given *once* to each of the cardinal points, and the medicine-man smokes his pipe in those directions. On the second day, *twice* to each; *three times* to each on the third day, and *four times* to each on the fourth. As a signal for the dancers and other characters (as well as the public) to assemble, the old man, master of ceremonies, with the medicine-pipe in hand, dances out of the lodge, singing (or rather crying) forth a most pitiful lament, until he approaches the big canoe, against which he leans, with the pipe in his hand, and continues to cry. At this instant, four very aged and patriarchal looking men, whose bodies are painted red, and who have been guarding the four sides of the lodge, enter it and bring out the four sacks of water, which they place near the big canoe, where they seat themselves by the side of them and commence thumping on them with the mallets or drumsticks which have been lying on them; and another brandishes and shakes the *eeh-na-dees* or rattles, and all unite to them their voices, raised to the highest pitch possible, as the music for the *bull-dance*, which is then commenced and continued for fifteen minutes or more in perfect time, and without cessation or intermission. When the music and dancing stop, which are always perfectly simultaneous, the whole nation raise the huzza! and a deafening shout of approbation; the master of ceremonies dances back to the medicine-lodge, and the old men return to their former place; the sacks of water, and all rest as before, until by the same method, they are again called into a similar action.

The supernumeraries or other characters who play their parts in this grand spectacle, are numerous and well worth description. By the side of the

796 535 big canoe are seen two men with the skins of grizzly bears thrown over them, using the skins as a mask, over their heads. These ravenous animals are continually growling and threatening to devour everything before them and interfering with the forms of their religious ceremony. To appease them, the women are continually bringing and placing before them dishes of meat, which are as often snatched up and carried to the prairie, by two men whose bodies are painted black and their heads white, whom they call bald eagles, who are darting by them and grasping their food from before them as they pass. These are again chased upon the plains by a hundred or more small boys, who are naked, with their bodies painted yellow and their heads white, whom they call *Cabris* or antelopes; who at length get the food away from them and devour it; thereby inculcating (perhaps) the beautiful moral, that by the dispensations of Providence, his bountiful gifts will fall at last to the hands of the innocent.

During the intervals between these dances, all these characters, except those from the medicine-lodge, retire to a wigwam close by, which they use on the occasion also as a sacred place, being occupied exclusively by them while they are at rest, and also for the purpose of painting and ornamenting their bodies for the occasion.

During each and every one of these dances, the old men who beat upon the sacks and sing, are earnestly chanting forth their supplications to the Great Spirit, for the continuation of his influence in sending them buffaloes to supply them with food during the year; they are administering courage and fortitude to the young men in the lodge, by telling them, that "the Great Spirit has opened his ears in their behalf—that the very atmosphere all about them is peace—that their women and children can hold the mouth of the grizzly bear—that they have invoked from day to day O-ke-hee-de (the Evil Spirit)—that they are still challenging him to come, and yet he has not dared to make his appearance!"

796 But alas! in the last of these dances, on the fourth day, in the midst of all their mirth and joy, and about noon, and in the height of all these exultations, an instant scream burst forth from the tops of the lodges!—men, women, dogs and all, seemed actually to howl and shudder with alarm, as they fixed their glaring eye-balls upon the prairie bluff, about a mile in the west, down the side of which a man was seen descending at full speed towards the village! This strange character darted about in a zig-zag course in all directions on the prairie, like a boy in pursuit of a butterfly, until he approached the piquets of the village, when it was discovered that his body was entirely naked, and painted as black as a negro, with pounded charcoal and bear's grease; his body was therefore everywhere of a shining black, except occasionally white rings of an inch or more in diameter, which were marked here and there all over him; and frightful indentures of white around his mouth, resembling canine teeth. Added to his hideous appearance, he gave the most frightful shrieks and screams as he dashed through the village

and entered the terrified group, which was composed (in that quarter) chiefly of females, who had assembled to witness the amusements which were transpiring around the "big canoe."

This unearthly looking creature carried in his two hands a wand or staff of eight or nine feet in length, with a red ball at the end of it, which he continually slid on the ground a-head of him as he ran. All eyes in the village, save those of the persons engaged in the dance, were centred upon him, and he made a desperate rush towards the women, who screamed for protection as they were endeavouring to retreat; and falling in groups upon each other as they were struggling to get out of his reach. In this moment of general terror and alarm there was an instant check! and all for a few moments were as silent as death.

The old master of ceremonies, who had run from his position at the big canoe, had met this monster of fiends, and having thrust the *medicine-pipe* before him, held him still and immoveable under its charm! This check gave the females an opportunity to get out of his reach, and when they were free from their danger, though all hearts beat yet with the instant excitement, their alarm soon cooled down into the most exorbitant laughter and shouts of applause at his sudden defeat, and the awkward and ridiculous posture in which he was stopped and held. The old man was braced stiff by his side, with his eye-balls glaring him in the face, whilst the medicine-pipe held in its mystic chains his *Satanic* Majesty, annulling all the powers of his magical wand, and also depriving him of the powers of locomotion! Surely no two human beings ever presented a more striking group than these two individuals did for a few moments, with their eye-balls set in direct mutual hatred upon each other; both struggling for the supremacy, relying on the potency of their medicine or mystery. The one held in check, with his body painted black, representing (or rather assuming to be) his sable majesty, O-kee-hee-de (the Evil Spirit), frowning everlasting vengeance on the other, who sternly gazed him back with a look of exultation and contempt, as he held him in check and disarmed under the charm of his sacred mystery-pipe.

When the superior powers of the medicine-pipe (on which hang all these annual mysteries) had been thus fully tested and acknowledged, and the women had had requisite time to withdraw from the reach of this fiendish monster, the pipe was very gradually withdrawn from before him, and he seemed delighted to recover the use of his limbs again, and power of changing his position from the exceedingly unpleasant and really ridiculous one he appeared in, and was compelled to maintain, a few moments before; rendered more superlatively ridiculous and laughable, from the further information, which I am constrained to give, of the plight in which this demon of terror and vulgarity made his *entrée* into the midst of the Mandan village, and to the centre and nucleus of their first and greatest religious ceremony.

●796 Then, to proceed: I said that this strange personage's body was naked—was painted jet black with charcoal and bear's grease, with a wand in his hands of eight feet in length with a red ball at the end of it, which he was rubbing about on the ground in front of him as he ran. In addition to this he had—*ung gee ah waheea notch,t oheks tcha, ung gee an ung hutch tow a tow ah ches menny. Ung gee ah to to wun nee, ahkst to wan ee eigh' s ta w.*

In this plight, in which I have not dared fully to represent him in the picture, he pursued the groups of females, spreading dismay and alarm wherever he went, and consequently producing the awkward and exceedingly laughable predicament in which he was placed by the sudden check from the medicine-pipe, as I have above stated, when all eyes were intently fixed upon him, and all joined in rounds of applause for the success of the magic spell that was placed upon him; all voices were raised in shouts of satisfaction at his defeat, and all eyes gazed upon him; of chiefs and of warriors—matrons and even of their tender-aged and timid daughters, whose education had taught them to receive the *moral* of these scenes without the shock of impropriety, that would have startled a more fastidious and consequently sensual-thinking people.

After repeated attempts thus made, and thus defeated in several parts of the crowd, this blackened monster was retreating over the ground where the buffalo-dance was going on, and having (apparently, par accident) swaggered against one of the men placed under the skin of a buffalo and engaged in the "bull dance," he started back, and placing himself in the attitude of a buffalo,—*hi ung ee a wahkstia, chee a nahk s tammee ung s towa; ee ung ee aht gwaht ee o nunghths tcha ho a, tummee oxt no ah, ughstono ah hi en en ah nakxt gwi aht gahtch gun ne. Gwee en on doatcht chee en aht gunne how how en akxst tchu!*

After this he paid his visits to three others of the eight, in succession, receiving as before the deafening shouts of approbation which pealed from every mouth in the multitude, who were all praying to the Great Spirit to send them buffaloes to supply them with food during the season, and who attribute the coming of buffaloes for this purpose entirely to the strict and critical observance of this ridiculous and disgusting part of the ceremonies.

During the half hour or so that he had been jostled about amongst man and beasts, to the great amusement and satisfaction of the lookers-on, he seemed to have become exceedingly exhausted, and anxiously looking out for some feasible mode of escape.

In this awkward predicament he became the laughing-stock and butt for the women, who being no longer afraid of him, were gathering in groups around, to tease and tantalize him; and in the midst of this dilemma, which soon became a very sad one—one of the women, who stole up behind him with both hands full of yellow dirt—dashed it into his face and eyes, and till

796 over him, and his body being covered with grease, took instantly a different hue. He seemed heart-broken at this signal disgrace, and commenced crying most vehemently, when, *a l'instant*, another caught his *wand* from his hand, and broke it across her knee. It was snatched for by others, who broke it still into bits, and then threw them at him. His power was now gone—his bodily strength was exhausted, and he made a bolt for the prairie—he dashed through the crowd, and made his way through the piquets on the back part of the village, where were placed for the purpose, an hundred or more women and girls, who escorted him as he ran on the prairie for half a mile or more, beating him with sticks, and stones, and dirt, and kicks, and cuffs, until he was at length seen escaping from their clutches, and making the best of his retreat over the prairie bluffs, from whence he first appeared.

At the moment of this signal victory, and when all eyes lost sight of him as he disappeared over the bluffs, the whole village united their voices in shouts of satisfaction. The bull-dance then stopped, and preparations were instantly made for the commencement of the cruelties which were to take place within the lodge, leaving us to draw, from what had just transpired, the following beautiful moral:—

That in the midst of their religious ceremonies, the Evil Spirit (O-kee-hee-de) made his entrée for the purpose of doing mischief, and of disturbing their worship—that he was held in check, and defeated by the superior influence and virtue of the *medicine-pipe*, and at last, driven in disgrace out of the village, by the very part of the community whom he came to abuse.

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At the close of this exciting scene, preparations were made, as above stated, by the return of the master of ceremonies and musicians to the medicine-lodge, where also were admitted at the same time a number of men, who were to be instruments of the cruelties to be inflicted; and also the chief and doctors of the tribe, who were to look on, and bear witness to, and decide upon, the comparative degree of fortitude, with which the young men sustain themselves in this most extreme and excruciating ordeal. The chiefs having seated themselves on one side of the lodge, dressed out in their robes and splendid head-dresses—the band of music seated and arranged themselves in another part; and the old master of ceremonies having placed himself in front of a small fire in the centre of the lodge, with his "big pipe" in his hands, and having commenced smoking to the Great Spirit, with all possible vehemence for the success of these aspirants, presented the subject for the third picture, which they call "*pohk-hong*," the cutting scene (PLATE 68). Around the sides of the lodge are seen, still reclining, as I have before mentioned, a part of the group, whilst others of them have passed the ordeal of self-tortures, and have been removed out of the lodge; and others still are seen in the very act of submitting to them, which were inflicted in the following manner:—After having removed the *sanctissimus sanctorum*, or little scaffold, of which I before spoke, and having

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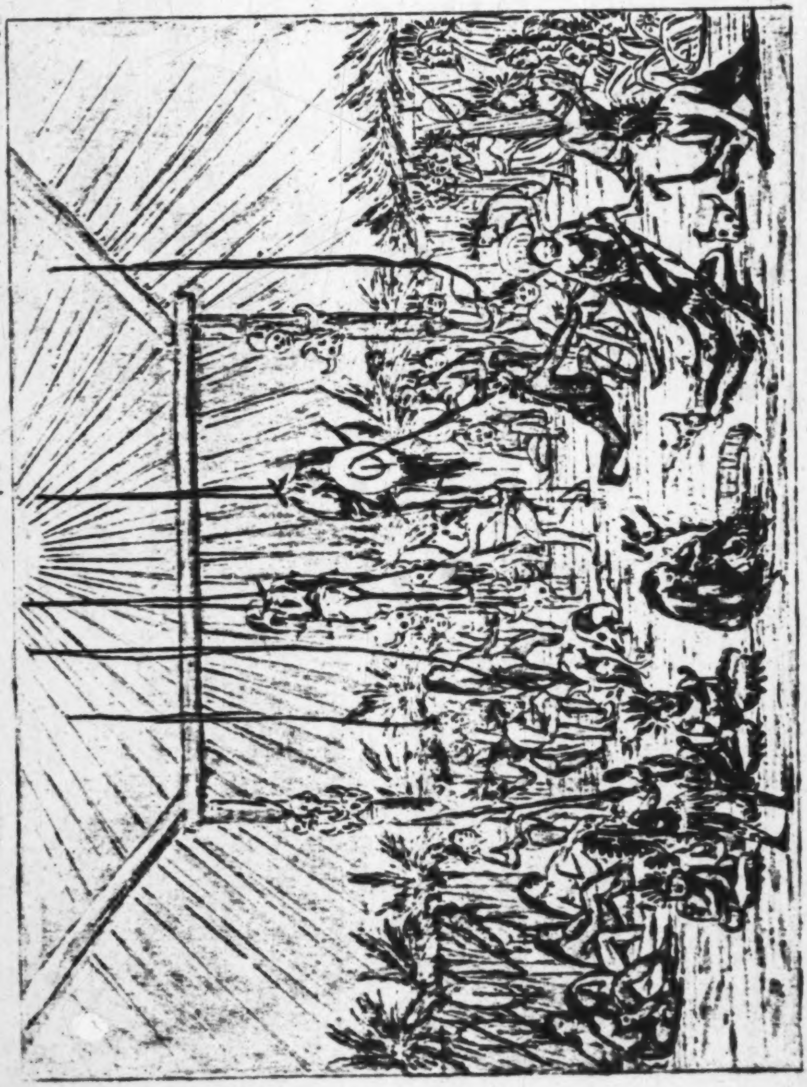

[facing p. 169]

796 881 removed also the buffalo and human skulls from the floor, and attached them to the posts of the lodge; and two men having taken their positions near the middle of the lodge, for the purpose of inflicting the tortures—the one with the scalping-knife, and the other with the bunch of splints (which I have before mentioned) in his hand; one at a time of the young fellows, already emaciated with fasting, and thirsting, and waking, for nearly four days and nights, advanced from the side of the lodge, and placed himself on his hands and feet, or otherwise, as best suited for the performance of the operation, where he submitted to the cruelties in the following manner:—An inch or more of the flesh on each shoulder, or each breast was taken up between the thumb and finger by the man who held the knife in his right hand; and the knife, which had been ground sharp on both edges, and then hacked and notched with the blade of another, to make it produce as much pain as possible, was forced through the flesh below the fingers, and being withdrawn, was followed with a splint or skewer, from the other, who held a bunch of such in his left hand, and was ready to force them through the wound. There were then two cords lowered down from the top of the lodge (by men who were placed on the lodge outside, for the purpose), which were fastened to these splints or skewers, and they instantly began to haul him up; he was thus raised until his body was suspended from the ground where he rested, until the knife and a splint were passed through the flesh or integuments in a similar manner on each arm below the shoulder (over the *brachialis externus*), below the elbow (over the *extensor carpi radialis*), on the thighs (over the *vastus externus*), and below the knees (over the *peroneus*).

In some instances they remained in a reclining position on the ground until this painful operation was finished, which was performed, in all instances, exactly on the same parts of the body and limbs; and which, in its progress, occupied some five or six minutes.

Each one was then instantly raised with the cords, until the weight of his body was suspended by them, and then, while the blood was streaming down their limbs, the bystanders hung upon the splints each man's appropriate shield, bow and quiver, &c.; and in many instances, the skull of a buffalo with the horns on it, was attached to each lower arm and each lower leg, for the purpose, probably, of preventing by their great weight, the struggling, which might otherwise have taken place to their disadvantage whilst they were hung up.

When these things were all adjusted, each one was raised higher by the cords, until these weights all swung clear from the ground, leaving his feet, in most cases, some six or eight feet above the ground. In this plight they at once became appalling and frightful to look at—the flesh, to support the weight of their bodies, with the additional weights which were attached to them, was raised six or eight inches by the skewers; and their heads sunk forward on the breasts, or thrown backwards, in a much more frightful condition, according to the way in which they were hung up.

The unflinching fortitude, with which every one of them bore this part of 796 the torture surpassed credulity; each one as the knife was passed through his 881 flesh sustained an unchangeable countenance; and several of them, seeing me making sketches, beckoned me to look at their faces, which I watched through all this horrid operation, without being able to detect anything but the pleasantest smiles as they looked me in the eye, while I could hear the knife rip through the flesh, and feel enough of it myself, to start involuntary and uncontroullable tears over my cheeks.

When raised to the condition above described, and completely suspended by the cords, the sanguinary hands, through which he had just passed, turned back to perform a similar operation on another who was ready, and each one in his turn passed into the charge of others, who instantly introduced him to a new and improved stage of their refinements in cruelty.

Surrounded by imps and demons as they appear, a dozen or more, who seem to be concerting and devising means for his exquisite agony, gather around him, when one of the number advances towards him in a sneering manner, and commences turning him around with a pole which he brings in his hand for the purpose. This is done in a gentle manner at first; but gradually increased, when the brave fellow, whose proud spirit can controul its agony no longer, burst out in the most lamentable and heart-rending cries that the human voice is capable of producing, crying forth a prayer to the Great Spirit to support and protect him in this dreadful trial; and continually repeating his confidence in his protection. In this condition he is continued to be turned, faster and faster—and there is no hope of escape from it, nor chance for the slightest relief, until by fainting, his voice falters, and his struggling ceases, and he hangs, apparently, a still and lifeless corpse! When he is, by turning, gradually brought to this condition, which is generally done within ten or fifteen minutes, there is a close scrutiny passed upon him among his tormentors, who are checking and holding each other back as long as the least struggling or tremour can be discovered, lest he should be removed before he is (as they term it) "entirely dead."

When brought to this alarming and most frightful condition, and the turning has gradually ceased, as his voice and his strength have given out, leaving him to hang entirely still, and apparently lifeless; when his tongue is distended from his mouth, and his *medicine-bag*, which he has affectionately and superstitiously clung to with his left hand, has dropped to the ground; the signal is given to the men on top of the lodge, by gently striking the cord with the pole below, when they very gradually and carefully lower him to the ground.

In this helpless condition he lies, like a loathsome corpse to look at, though in the keeping (as they call it) of the Great Spirit, whom he trusts will protect him, and enable him to get up and walk away. As soon as he is lowered to the ground thus, one of the bystanders advances, and pulls out the two splints or pins from the breasts and shoulders, thereby disengaging

796 him from the cords by which he has been hung up; but leaving all the others with their weights, &c. hanging to his flesh.

881 In this condition he lies for six or eight minutes, until he gets strength to rise and move himself, for no one is allowed to assist or offer him aid, as he is here enjoying the most valued privilege which a Mandan can boast of, that of "trusting his life to the keeping of the Great Spirit," in this time of extreme peril.

796 881 304 As soon as he is seen to get strength enough to rise on his hands and feet, and drag his body around the lodge, he crawls with the weights still hanging to his body, to another part of the lodge, where there is another Indian sitting with a hatchet in his hand, and a dried buffalo skull before him; and here, in the most earnest and humble manner, by holding up the little finger of his left hand to the Great Spirit, he expresses to Him, in a speech of a few words, his willingness to give it as a sacrifice; when he lays it on the dried buffalo skull, where the other chops it off near the hand, with a blow of the hatchet!

Nearly all of the young men whom I saw passing this horrid ordeal, gave in the above manner, the little finger of the left hand; and I saw also several, who immediately afterwards (and apparently with very little concern or emotion), with a similar speech, extended in the same way, the *fore*finger of the same hand, and that too was struck off; leaving on the left hand only the two middle fingers and the thumb; all which they deem absolutely essential for holding the bow, the only weapon for the left hand.

One would think that this mutilation had thus been carried quite far enough; but I have since examined several of the head chiefs and dignitaries of the tribe, who have also given, in this manner, the little finger of the right hand, which is considered by them to be a much greater sacrifice than both of the others; and I have found also a number of their most famous men, who furnish me incontestible proof, by five or six corresponding scars on each arm, and each breast, and each leg, that they had so many times in their lives submitted to this almost incredible operation, which seems to be optional with them; and the oftener they volunteer to go through it, the more famous they become in the estimation of their tribe.

No bandages are applied to the fingers which have been amputated, nor any arteries taken up; nor is any attention whatever, paid to them or the other wounds; but they are left (as they say) "for the Great Spirit to cure, who will surely take good care of them." It is a remarkable fact (which I learned from a close inspection of their wounds from day to day) that the bleeding is but very slight and soon ceases, probably from the fact of their extreme exhaustion and debility, caused by want of sustenance and sleep, which checks the natural circulation, and admirably at the same time prepares them to meet the severity of these tortures without the same degree of sensibility and pain, which, under other circumstances, might result in inflammation and death.

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During the whole of the time of this cruel part of these most extraordinary inflictions, the chiefs and dignitaries of the tribe are looking on, to decide who are the hardiest and "stoutest hearted"—who can hang the longest by his flesh before he faints, and who will be soonest up, after he has been down; that they may know whom to appoint to lead a war-party, or place at the most honourable and desperate post. The four old men are incessantly beating upon the sacks of water and singing the whole time, with their voices strained to the highest key, vaunting forth, for the encouragement of the young men, the power and efficacy of the *medicine-pipe*, which has disarmed the monster O-kee-hee-de (or Evil Spirit), and driven him from the village, and will be sure to protect them and watch over them through their present severe trial.

As soon as six or eight had passed the ordeal as above described, they were led out of the lodge, with their weights hanging to their flesh, and dragging on the ground, to undergo another, and a still more appalling mode of suffering in the centre of the village, and in presence of the whole nation, in the manner as follows:—

The signal for the commencement of this part of the cruelties was given by the old master of ceremonies, who again ran out as in the buffalo-dance, and leaning against the big canoe, with his *medicine-pipe* in his hand, began to cry. This was done several times in the afternoon, as often as there were six or eight who had passed the ordeal just described within the lodge, who were then taken out in the open area, in the presence of the whole village, with the buffalo skulls and other weights attached to their flesh, and dragging on the ground! There were then in readiness, and prepared for the purpose, about twenty young men, selected of equal height and equal age; with their bodies chiefly naked, with beautiful (and similar) head-dresses of war-eagles' quills, on their heads, and a wreath made of willow boughs held in the hands between them, connecting them in a chain or circle in which they ran around the *big canoe*, with all possible speed, raising their voices in screams and yelps to the highest pitch that was possible, and keeping the curb or big canoe in the centre, as their nucleus.

Then were led forward the young men who were further to suffer, and being placed at equal distances apart, and outside of the ring just described, each one was taken in charge of two athletic young men, fresh and strong, who stepped up to him, one on each side, and by wrapping a broad leather strap around his wrists, without tying it, grasped it firm underneath the hand, and stood prepared for what they call *Eh-ke-nah-ka-nah-pick* (the last race, PLATE 69). This, the spectator looking on would suppose was most correctly named, for he would think it was the last race they could possibly run in this world.

In this condition they stand, pale and ghastly, from abstinence and loss of blood, until all are prepared, and the word is given, when all start and run around, outside of the other ring; and each poor fellow, with his weights

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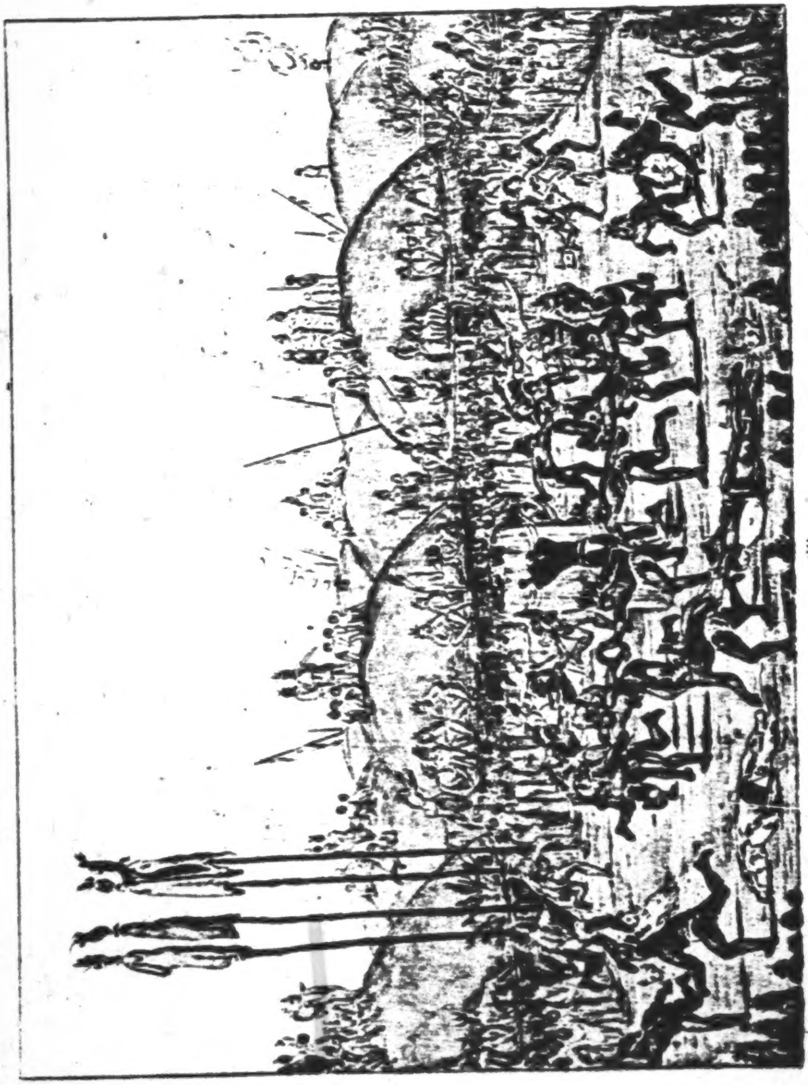

[facing p. 173]

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dragging on the ground, and his furious conductors by his side, who hurry him forward by the wrists, struggles in the desperate emulation to run longer without "dying" (as they call it) than his comrades, who are fainting around him and sinking down, like himself, where their bodies are dragged with all possible speed, and often with their faces in the dirt. In the commencement of this dance or race they all start at a moderate pace, and their speed being gradually increased, the pain becomes so excruciating that their languid and exhausted frames give out, and they are dragged by their wrists until they are disengaged from the weights that were attached to their flesh, and this must be done by such violent force as to tear the flesh out with the splint, which (as they say) can never be pulled out endwise, without greatly offending the Great Spirit and defeating the object for which they have thus far suffered. The splints or skewers which are put through the breast and the shoulders, take up a part of the pectoral or trapezius muscle, which is necessary for the support of the great weight of their bodies, and which, as I have before mentioned, are withdrawn as soon as he is lowered down—but all the others, on the legs and arms, seem to be very ingeniously passed through the flesh and integuments without taking up the muscle, and even these, to be broken out, require so strong and so violent a force that most of the poor fellows fainted under the operation, and when they were freed from the last of the buffalo skulls and other weights, (which was often done by some of the bystanders throwing the weight of their bodies on to them as they were dragging on the ground) they were in every instance dropped by the persons who dragged them, and their bodies were left, appearing like nothing but a mangled and a loathsome corpse! At this strange and frightful juncture, the two men who had dragged them, fled through the crowd and away upon the prairie, as if they were guilty of some enormous crime, and were fleeing from summary vengeance.

Each poor fellow, having thus patiently and manfully endured the privations and tortures devised for him, and (in this last struggle with the most appalling effort) torn himself loose from them and his tormentors, he lies the second time, in the "keeping (as he terms it) of the Great Spirit," to whom he issues his repeated prayers, and entrusts his life: and in whom he reposes the most implicit confidence for his preservation and recovery. As an evidence of this, and of the high value which these youths set upon this privilege, there is no person, not a relation or a chief of the tribe, who is allowed, or who would dare, to step forward to offer an aiding hand, even to save his life; for not only the rigid customs of the nation, and the pride of the individual who has entrusted his life to the keeping of the Great Spirit, would sternly reject such a tender; but their superstition, which is the strongest of all arguments in an Indian community, would alone, hold all the tribe in fear and dread of interfering, when they consider they have so good a reason to believe that the Great Spirit has undertaken the special care and protection of his devoted worshippers.

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In this "last race," which was the struggle that finally closed their sufferings, each one was dragged until he fainted, and was thus left, looking more like the dead than the living: and thus each one laid, until, by the aid of the Great Spirit, he was in a few minutes seen gradually rising, and at last reeling and staggering, like a drunken man, through the crowd (which made way for him) to his wigwam, where his friends and relatives stood ready to take him into hand and restore him.

In this frightful scene, as in the buffalo-dance, the whole nation was assembled as spectators, and all raised the most piercing and violent yells and screams they could possibly produce, to drown the cries of the suffering ones, that no heart could even be touched with sympathy for them. I have mentioned before, that six or eight of the young men were brought from the medicine-lodge at a time, and when they were thus passed through this shocking ordeal, the medicine-men and the chiefs returned to the interior, where as many more were soon prepared, and underwent a similar treatment; and after that another batch, and another, and so on, until the whole number, some forty-five or fifty had run in this sickening circle, and, by leaving their weights, had opened the flesh for honourable scars. I said *all*, but there was one poor fellow though (and I shudder to tell it), who was dragged around and around the circle, with the skull of an elk hanging to the flesh on one of his legs,—several had jumped upon it, but to no effect, for the splint was under the sinew, which could not be broken. The dragging became every instant more and more furious, and the apprehensions for the poor fellow's life, apparent by the piteous howl which was set up for him by the multitude around; and at last the medicine-man ran, with his medicine-pipe in his hand, and held them in check, when the body was dropped, and left upon the ground, with the skull yet hanging to it. The boy, who was an extremely interesting and fine-looking youth, soon recovered his senses and his strength, looking deliberately at his torn and bleeding limbs; and also with the most pleasant smile of defiance, upon the misfortune which had now fallen to his peculiar lot, crawled through the crowd (instead of walking, which they are never again at liberty to do until the flesh is torn out, and the article left) to the prairie, and over which, for the distance of half a mile, to a sequestered spot, without any attendant, where he laid three days and three nights, yet longer, without food, and praying to the Great Spirit, until suppuration took place in the wound, and by the decaying of the flesh the weight was dropped, and the splint also, which he dare not extricate in another way. At the end of this, he crawled back to the village on his hands and knees, being too much emaciated to walk, and begged for something to eat, which was at once given him, and he was soon restored to health.

These extreme and difficult cases often occur, and I learn that in such instances the youth has it at his option to get rid of the weight that is thus left upon him, in such way as he may choose, and some of those modes are

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far more extraordinary than the one which I have just named. Several of the Traders, who have been for a number of years in the habit of seeing this part of the ceremony, have told me that two years since, when they were looking on, there was one whose flesh on the arms was so strong that the weights could not be left, and he dragged them with his body to the river by the side of the village, where he set a stake fast in the ground on the top of the bank, and fastening cords to it, he let himself half-way down a perpendicular wall of rock, of twenty-five or thirty feet, where the weight of his body was suspended by the two cords attached to the flesh of his arms. In this awful condition he hung for several days, equi-distant from the top of the rock and the deep water below, into which he at last dropped and saved himself by swimming ashore!

I need record no more of these shocking and disgusting instances, of which I have already given enough to convince the world of the correctness of the established fact of the Indian's superior stoicism and power of endurance, although some recent writers have, from motives of envy, from ignorance, or something else, taken great pains to cut the poor Indian short in everything, and in *this*, even as if it were a virtue.

I am ready to accord to them in this particular, the palm; the credit of outdoing anything and everybody, and of enduring more than civilized man ever aspired to or ever thought of. My heart has sickened also with disgust for so abominable and ignorant a custom, and still I stand ready with all my heart, to excuse and forgive them for adhering so strictly to an ancient celebration, founded in superstitions and mysteries, of which they know not the origin, and constituting a material part and feature in the code and forms of their religion.

Reader, I will return with you a moment to the medicine-lodge, which is just to be closed, and then we will indulge in some general reflections upon what has passed, and in what, and for what purposes this strange batch of mysteries has been instituted and perpetuated.

After these young men, who had for the last four days occupied the medicine-lodge, had been operated on, in the manner above described, and taken out of it, the old medicine-man, master of ceremonies, returned, (still crying to the Great Spirit) sole tenant of that sacred place, and brought out the "edged tools," which I before said had been collected at the door of every man's wigwam, to be given as a sacrifice to the water, and leaving the lodge securely fastened, he approached the bank of the river, when all the medicine-men attended him, and all the nation were spectators; and in their presence he threw them from a high bank into very deep water, from which they cannot be recovered, and where they are, correctly speaking, made a sacrifice to the water. This part of the affair took place just exactly at sun-down, and closed the scene, being the end or finale of the *Mandan religious ceremony*.

outer surface until after the Deluge. When an Indian story is told, it is 773
like all other gifts, " to be taken for what it is worth," and for any seeming inconsistency in their traditions there is no remedy; for as far as I have tried to reconcile them by reasoning with, or questioning them, I have been entirely defeated; and more than that, have generally incurred their distrust and ill-will. One of the Mandan doctors told me very gravely a few days since, that the earth was a large tortoise, that it carried the dirt on its back—that a tribe of people, who are now dead, and whose faces were white, used to dig down very deep in this ground to catch *badgers;* and that one day they stuck a knife through the tortoise-shell, and it sunk down so that the water ran over its back, and drowned all but one man. And on the next day while I was painting his portrait, he told me there were *four tortoises,*—one in the North—one in the East—one in the South, and one in the West; that each one of these rained ten days, and the water covered over the earth.

These ignorant and conflicting accounts, and both from the same man, give as good a demonstration, perhaps, of what I have above mentioned, as to the inefficiency of Indian traditions as anything I could at present mention. They might, perhaps, have been in this instance however the creeds of different sects, or of different priests amongst them, who often advance diametrically opposite theories and traditions relative to history and mythology.

And however ignorant and ridiculous they may seem, they are yet worthy of a little further consideration, as relating to a number of curious circumstances connected with the unaccountable religious ceremonies which I have just described

The Mandan chiefs and doctors, in all their feasts, where the pipe is lit 782
and about to be passed around, deliberately propitiate the good-will and 788
favour of the Great Spirit, by extending the stem of the pipe *upwards* before they smoke it themselves; and also as deliberately and as strictly offering the stem to the four *cardinal points* in succession, and then drawing a whiff through it, passing it around amongst the group.

The *annual religious ceremony* invariably lasts *four* days, and the other 796
following circumstances attending these strange forms, and seeming to have 801
some allusion to the *four* cardinal points, or the " four tortoises," seem to me to be worthy of further notice. *Four* men are selected by Nu-mohk-muck-a-nah (as I have before said), to cleanse out and prepare the medicine-lodge for the occasion—one he calls from the *north* part of the village—one from the *east*—one from the *south*, and one from the *west*. The *four* sacks of water, in form of large tortoises, resting on the floor of the lodge and before described, would seem to be typical of the same thing; and also the *four* buffalo, and the *four* human skulls resting on the floor of the same lodge—the *four* couples of dancers in the " bull-dance," as before described; and also the *four* intervening dancers in the same dance, and also described.

796 801 The bull-dance in front of the medicine-lodge, repeated on the *four* days, is danced *four* times on the first day, *eight* times on the second, *twelve* times on the third, and *sixteen* times on the *fourth;* (adding *four* dances on each of the *four* days,) which added together make *forty*, the exact number of days that it rained upon the earth, according to the Mosaic account, to produce the Deluge. There are *four* sacrifices of black and blue cloths erected over the door of the medicine-lodge—the visits of Oh-kee-hee-de (or Evil Spirit) were paid to *four* of the buffaloes in the buffalo-dance, as above described; and in every instance, the young men who underwent the tortures before explained, had *four* splints or skewers run through the flesh on their legs—*four* through the arms and *four* through the body.

000 Such is a brief account of these strange scenes which I have just been witnessing, and such my brief history of the Mandans. I might write much more on them, giving yet a volume on their stories and traditions; but it would be a volume of fables, and scarce worth recording. A nation of Indians in their primitive condition, where there are no historians, have but a temporary historical existence, for the reasons above advanced, and their history, what can be certainly learned of it, may be written in a very small compass.

I have dwelt longer on the history and customs of these people than I have or shall on any other tribe, in all probability, and that from the fact that I have found them a very peculiar people, as will have been seen by my notes.

From these very numerous and striking peculiarities in their personal appearance—their customs—traditions and language, I have been led conclusively to believe that they are a people of decidedly a different origin from that of any other tribe in these regions.

From these reasons, as well as from the fact that they are a small and feeble tribe, against whom the powerful tribe of Sioux are waging a deadly war with the prospect of their extermination; and who with their limited numbers, are not likely to hold out long in their struggle for existence, I have taken more pains to pourtray their whole character, than my limited means will allow me to bestow upon other tribes.

From the ignorant and barbarous and disgusting customs just recited, the world would naturally infer, that these people must be the most cruel and inhuman beings in the world—yet, such is not the case, and it becomes my duty to say it; a better, more honest, hospitable and kind people, as a community, are not to be found in the world. No set of men that ever I associated with have better hearts than the Mandans, and none are quicker to embrace and welcome a white man than they are—none will press him closer to his bosom, that the pulsation of his heart may be felt, than a Mandan; and no man in any country will keep his word and guard his honour more closely.

The shocking and disgusting custom that I have just described, sickens